CNMI takes lead to help pull off one of the best PIALA conferences. PAGE 2
Manta Ray Battalion completes Christmas Canned Food Drive. PAGE 8

Hafa Adai!

$1

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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Frahm ordered to pay restitution to victim

Frahm

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The U.S. District Court for the NMI has ordered that former local high school teacher David Matthew Frahm pay restitution to a victim identified in relation to the child pornography case he previous pleaded guilty to.

Fahm, who was sentenced back in November to 13 years' imprisonment for pleading guilty to charges of possession of child pornography and engaging in illicit sexual conduct in foreign places, has now been ordered to pay restitution to one of the victims of the case.

During a restitution hearing last week, District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona ordered Frahm to pay restitution in the tune of $3,000 and an assessment fee of $200 for a total of $3,200.

Last month, Frahm appeared before Manglona for a sentencing in the child pornography case where he pleaded guilty to two of three counts.

During the hearing, Manglona

See FRAHM on Page 4

CNMI gets a $48.6M grant to fund clean energy heavy-duty vehicles

The Office of the Governor has announced that it has been awarded $48,690,688 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Heavy-Duty Vehicles (CHDV) Grant Program.

Palacios

This program, established under the Inflation Reduction Act,

See GRANT on Page 4

MACS working on securing Guam hangar

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
A photo of one of the planes that will be a part of Marianas Air Connection Services' fleet should they be granted a qualifying certificate and start providing regular inter-island air service.

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

In line with its goal to connect the Marianas, newly established inter-island air service provided Micronesian Air Connections Services is working on securing a hangar at the Guam International Airport.

MACS, operated by J&P Holdings LLC, is planning on bidding on an available hangar in Guam to allow direct air service from Saipan to Guam.

Although MACS is still awaiting it official qualifying

See MACS on Page 4

Bill to allow foreign physicians to practice in CNMI with Palacios

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives has passed Senate Bill 23-67, which essentially allows licensed physicians from foreign countries to practice medicine at the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp. and it is now with Gov. Arnold I. Palacios.

Manglona

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INSIDE

BUSINESS
Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan is thrilled to announce its much-anticipated New Year's Eve Countdown Party and it's free entry for everyone.
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WORLD
People started gathering in prayer on Thursday and visiting the mass graves in Indonesia's Aceh province to mark 20 years since the massive Indian Ocean tsunami, one of modern history's worst natural disasters.
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LIFE & STYLE
Beyoncé provided more excitement than either game during Netflix's NFL debut on Christmas Day. Riding into her halftime appearance on a white horse, the 32-time Grammy winner rocked her hometown Houston crowd with a nearly 13-minute performance on Wednesday.
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Local

CNMI takes lead to help pull off one of the best PIALA conferences

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
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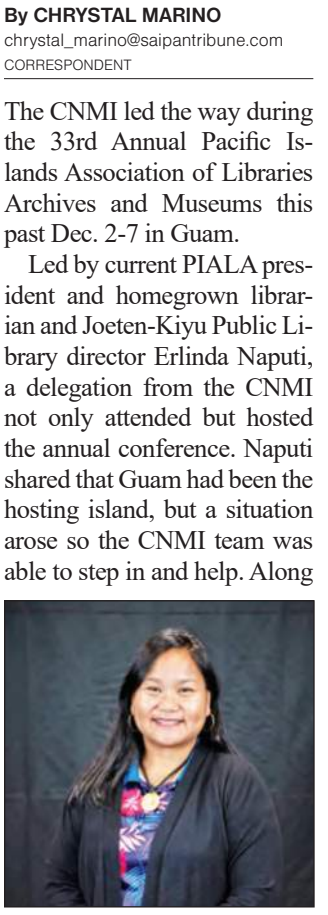
CORRESPONDENT

The CNMI led the way during the 33rd Annual Pacific Islands Association of Libraries Archives and Museums this past Dec. 2-7 in Guam.

Led by current PIALA president and homegrown librarian and Joeten-Kiyu Public Library director Erlinda Naputi, a delegation from the CNMI not only attended but hosted the annual conference. Naputi shared that Guam had been the hosting island, but a situation arose so the CNMI team was able to step in and help. Along with their Guam partners Department of CHamoru Affair, Guam Museum, Guam Public Library System, Guam Library Association, University of Guam's Robert F. Kennedy Library & Guam Cultural Repository, the group was able to pull off one of the best conferences yet.



JKPL
Joeten-Kiyu Public Library director Erlinda Naputi.

JKPL
Staff of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library, including director Erlinda Naputi, and a guest speaker at the 33rd Annual Pacific Islands Association of Libraries Archives and Museum conference pose for a photo with Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero after the last day of the conference.

The CNMI had hosted the conference four times in the past ovcr 30 years, the most recent one was in 2022, but this was the first time to host the event on another island.

"We kind of made sure everything was in place. We brought down the certificates, we brought down name tags, we brought down anything and everything that we needed that needed to be used and

See PIALA on Page 3

JKPL

A group photo taken from the last day of the PIALA conference in Guam.

JKPL

PIALA conference delegates pose for a photo during the post PIALA conference tour at the Latte Village in Guam.

PIALA

From page 2

utilized, and then the Guam Public Library of course sent out their staff to ensure that we have a smooth transition when it's registration time, because there were only eight of us that went down, we didn't take the whole entire team this time. But we had the Guam Public Library to help us with registration, the silent auction, and they helped hold down the fort while our staff are presenting and helping inside the venue because everything took place in the museum. We had our conference in the amphitheater of the museum while the registration is in the forefront of the museum area, but the most beautiful part about it was we had a lot of local artists that came out and were selling their local products you know it was really a nice setup... just having everyone there and then discussing indigenizing our library archives and museum and in a Chamorro context all the artists was there so it was it made it so meaningful like it added value to the conference," said Naputi.

Joining Naputi, among the conference speakers, panelists, and presenters from the CNMI were NMI Museum of History and Culture executive director Leni Leon and JKPLs Celina Foreman, Caitlyn Crisostomo, Leoralynn Telaje, Omar T. Manacop, Carrie Camacho, and Beth Demapan as well as Northern Marianas Humanities Council's Roberto Santos.

The six-day conference brought together library professionals, archivists as well as museum curators not only from the CNMI and Guam but from all over the Pacific region, from the Republic of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Hawaii, New Zealand and American Samoa—to share knowledge and best practices. The conference featured onsite and offsite experiences and learning, including pre and post conference tours and discussion panels onsite at the Guam Museum, and offsite tours at the Valley of the Latte, the Guam Cultural Respository, the University of Guam's Richard Flores Taitano Micronesian Area Research Center, and the Ritidian Pictograph Cave and Latte village.

"It was a great opportunity to co-mingle and to collaborate with other people from the Pacific so it was nice it was always it's nice to always have those kind of conferences for people to mingle and to connect and to learn from one another, " said Naputi.

Even Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero attended the event and thanked PIALA for all they do.

During the conference, life achievement awards, were given to Dr. Tarsi Vunidilo and Toni " Malia" Ramirez for their contributions to Chamorro culture.

In her welcoming remarks, Naputi shared the reason behind this year's theme "Indigenizing Libraries, Archives, and Museums in the Pacific." She said the theme is particularly poignant in today's age of globalization and rapid technological advancements.

"As our island communities continue to evolve and adapt to modernity, it is essential that we do not lose sight of our cultural roots and traditional values. Our libraries, archives, and museums play a crucial role in preserving our heritage and passing it on to future generations."

She added "By indigenizing our institutions, we are not only reaffirming our identities as Pacific islanders but also reclaiming and celebrating our unique cultural heritage. This involves incorporating indigenous perspectives, practices, and values into the way we manage and present our collections. It also means actively engaging with our communities and empowering them to participate in the preservation and interpretation of their own culture. "

The next PIALA conference is to be held in late December next year in the Marshall Islands.

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FRAHM

From page 1

sentenced Frahm to an imprisonment term of 156 months or 13 years. In addition, Manglona gave Frahm credit for time served of five months and eight days.

Specifically, for Count 2, possession of child pornography, Frahm was sentenced to 121 months' imprisonment term. As for Count 3, engaging in illicit sexual conduct in foreign places, he was sentenced to 156 months' imprisonment. The sentences will run concurrently with one another.

Meanwhile, Manglona imposed a strict probationary period of five years following Frahm's release from prison on top of requirements like having to register as a sex offender for 15 years after his release and to stay away from children and places where there may be children below the age of 18.

Aside from his sentence, Manglona granted the defense's request to recommend that Frahm serve his sentence near his parents' home in Henderson, Nevada.

According to the factual basis and statement of facts of Frahm's plea agreement, regarding Count 2, on or about March 27, 2019, in the District of the Northern Mariana Islands, Frahm knowingly possessed a laptop/computer which contained a visual depiction of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct.

"Defendant did so, knowing the computer contained a visual depiction of a minor engaged in sexually explicit conduct, specifically, a picture of a lascivious exhibition of the anus, genitals, and pubic area of a minor. The visual depiction was transported through a means or facility of interstate and foreign commerce, specifically, by using the laptop computer to transport the digital file in interstate commerce, from Ukraine, where the visual depiction was created, to the District of the Northern Mariana Islands," the plea agreement stated.

As for Count 3, on February 2024, Frahm was residing in a foreign country, specifically, in Malaysia, where he knowingly and intentionally produced a visual depiction by video of an 11-year-old child that was a lascivious exhibition of the child's pubic area, specifically, by surreptitiously video recording the child after taking a shower.

"Defendant used his mobile device that was capable of connecting to the internet, and which was an instrumentality that was transported in foreign commerce, specifically, an Android cellular telephone that was not manufactured in the country of Malaysia. This statement of facts is made for the limited purpose of supporting defendant's guilty plea. It therefore does not contain all facts relating to the underlying criminal conduct," the plea agreement stated.

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

The U.S. District Court for the NMI.

GRANT

From page 1

aims to accelerate the transition to zero-emission heavy-duty vehicles and infrastructure. The CNMI's award is part of a $735-million funding pool designated for the purchase of over 2,000 zero-emission vehicles nationwide.

The CHDV Grant Program, the first of its kind, is designed to replace internal combustion engine vehicles with zero-emission alternatives. It will fund the acquisition of battery-electric and hydrogen fuel cell vehicles, including transit buses, cargo trucks, emergency vehicles, refuse/recycling haulers, school buses, shuttle buses, and vocational vehicles.

In addition, the program supports infrastructure development and workforce training for the deployment of these cutting-edge technologies.

Gov. Arnold I. Palacios expressed his gratitude to the EPA and the agency's dedication to advancing clean energy solutions.

"This grant is a major milestone in the CNMI's movement toward cleaner transportation in the CNMI," said Palacios. "It will also create valuable, long-term employment opportunities."

He added, "Equally important, this investment will reduce government fuel and utility expenses, enabling significant savings while advancing the CNMI's renewable energy and sustainability efforts. With this grant, the CNMI is poised to make meaningful progress in our energy transition."

The governor also extended his thanks to EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan, program lead Trina Martynowicz, project officer Danielle Huang, and grants specialist Nelly Sun for their technical support and guidance in ensuring that the CNMI is given this opportunity. He also commended the CNMI team for their prompt and effective response in finalizing the technical and budgetary revisions required for the grant application.

This initiative is the result of a collaborative effort involving the Office of Grants Management and State Clearinghouse, the Northern Marianas Technical Institute, the Department of Public Works, the Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services, the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., and the Commonwealth Office on Transit Authority. In addition, the mayors from the respective municipalities of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota have partnered to extend the benefits of this program to all CNMI islands. The project is expected to commence in January 2025, with administration handled by the OGM-SC.

The program will replace 43 Class 6 and 7 internal combustion engine vehicles with new electric heavy-duty vehicles, including transit buses, fire engines, boom trucks, bucket trucks, and other vocational equipment.

Additionally, the grant will fund the construction of new carport infrastructure, the development of an Electric Vehicle maintenance training program, and the employment of grant managers to oversee the implementation of the project.

In the U.S., there are over three million Class 6 and 7 vehicles, many of which are powered by internal combustion engines that predate modern EPA emissions standards. These aging vehicles contribute to harmful pollutants, including nitrogen oxides (NOx), particulate matter (PM2.5), and greenhouse gases. Replacing these vehicles with zero-emission alternatives will significantly reduce emissions, improve air quality, and promote better public health outcomes. ***(PR)***

MACS

From page 1

certificate to officially start providing inter-island air service, to showcase their commitment to their goal of connecting the Mariana Islands, they have begun the process of securing a hangar at the Guam International Airport.

In a statement from J&P Holdings tax attorney Tina Azarvand, MACS intends to bid on a hangar.

"[MACS] is trying to secure a Guam hangar. Whoever's bid gets accepted is up to the Guam International Airport Authority. We just need to convince the Guam Airport Authority that it is in the best interest of the islands that the bid is given to MACS," she said.

Should MACS be granted the bid and Gov. Arnold I. Palacios officially grant J&P Holdings its qualifying certificate, Azarvand says CNMI-Guam flights could begin as early as January or February 2025.

"If MACS gets the hangar, that means there will be another option from Saipan to Guam," she said.

Azarvand stressed that MACS does not intend to compete with United Airlines, but rather collaborate with United Airlines (as well as other airlines) to fill service gaps.

"Particularly with connecting the islands. MACS and United have a great relationship. MACS want to collaborate and work together with United, and would hope to work with Star Marianas Air, Jeju, and other airlines to better reconnect all of the islands to the tourism ecosystem," she said.

Last week, the Commonwealth Economic Development Authority approved to recommend that a qualifying certificate be issued to J&P Holdings for a 100% tax abatement for a period of 22 years.

The qualifying certificate is integral to MACS' ability to carry out its plans to connect the Mariana Islands as it would be a multi-million dollar investment to carry out the plan.

Palacios, in a statement to *Saipan Tribune*, expressed that he believes businesses who will provide invaluable service to the CNMI should be incentivized and is looking forward to reviewing CEDA's recommendation as to MACS' qualifying certificate.

BILL

From page 1

Last week, the House of Representatives unanimously passed S.B. 23-67 SS1 and the bill now sits with Palacios for final approval.

Authored by Sen. Donald M. Manglona (Ind-Rota), the bill allows for a physician licensed to practice in a foreign country to be granted a license to practice in the CNMI subject to the requirements and conditions provided in the regulations of the Healthcare Professions Licensing Board.

Eligible foreign physicians must have education, training, examination results, and experience comparable to those of a person qualified for licensure in the CNMI.

Marty Roringer, deputy chief medical officer at CHCC and vice chairman of the Healthcare Professions Licensing Board, expressed that there is an increasing crisis across the nation due to a decline in the number of primary care and acute care providers.

"Not only here but it's a nationwide issue where there is a shrinking number of primary care and acute care providers in remote areas. This would include us here in Saipan but especially on Rota and Tinian. Trying to get an appointment with a primary care doctor is a challenge, this problem is upon us already and is not expected to get any better and we are required to explore other options in finding qualified doctors. This problem is certainly in primary care already but is expected to worsen in specialty care as well," he said.

At CHCC, Roringer said they have leveraged multiple recruiting resources without adequate results.

"I know the private sector struggles with this as well. Medical schools in the United States are graduating insufficient numbers of doctors for the aging population and this problem is expected to worsen," he said.

Fortunately, there are qualified people out there who can provide this level of care, and it has been proven through the Medical Referral Program. Unfortunately, current barriers are hindering qualified doctors from practicing here which is why he supports the passing of S.B. 23-67.

"Historically, in the CNMI, we've had the unique opportunity to send our patients to healthcare facilities outside the United States such as the Philippines, Taiwan, Korea, and Japan for care. We know there are qualified people who can care for our people who are not trained in the United States. Our current regulation laws are a barrier to bring qualified and excellent doctors to work here. I have absolute confidence that we have the resources to vet and ensure that we bring in skilled and qualified doctors from foreign countries to address this immediate and critical need especially for primary care in Saipan, Rota, and Tinian. Especially since the lack of specialty care is on our doorstep already," he said.

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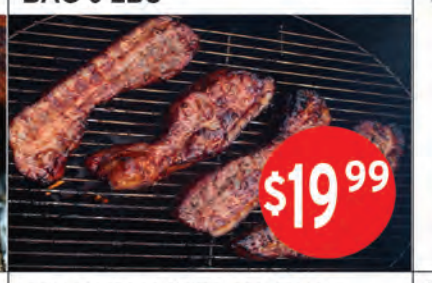
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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
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EDITORIAL

Federal anti-hazing law would help save lives

Jolayne Houtz and Hector Martinez lost their 19-year-old son in 2019. And like many parents who have had that experience, they vowed to keep his memory alive. The Bellevue couple used the enormous personal tragedy of their son's death to help thousands of others.

Samuel Martinez died after being hazed as a Washington State University freshman while pledging Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. He was coerced into drinking large amounts of alcohol and died of alcohol poisoning.

That set his parents on a mission to seek justice for Sam and to make sure other students and families don't suffer the same fate. Their diligence paid off in 2021 when Washington's Legislature passed the Sam Martinez Stop Hazing Act. The law made hazing a gross misdemeanor, rather than a simple misdemeanor. It also made hazing a felony if it results in substantial bodily harm. Washington was the 15th state to elevate hazing under those circumstances to a felony.

The law also ups the penalties for hazing from a maximum of 90 days to a year—and up to five years for a felony conviction.

The couple's lobbying efforts, along with those of other parents nationwide who have lost children to hazing, have made an impact nationally. After years of advocacy and research, a bipartisan bill that addresses hazing and creates accountability has passed the U.S. House and Senate and awaits President Joe Biden's signature.

The Stop Campus Hazing Act would require public and private colleges to publicly release information and statistics on hazing incidents, much like the current law requires colleges to make public on their websites reports on campus crimes such as sexual assault and burglary. Houtz twice went to D.C. to lobby for the bill.

The pending law also requires colleges to create anti-hazing education and hazing-prevention programs.

Secrecy is the shield that protects hazing. Both of these requirements will help students and their parents make informed decisions about which organizations are safe to join. It also emphasizes the seriousness of hazing and puts all campus organizations on alert that there will be consequences for their members' actions.

"I think the most compelling thing about this bill is that it impels colleges and universities to share what they know about these groups ... so that students and parents have access to that information," said Houtz, a former Seattle Times reporter and founder of the website hazinginfo.org.

Students should feel safe while participating in college activities and parents deserve the tools to make sure they will be.

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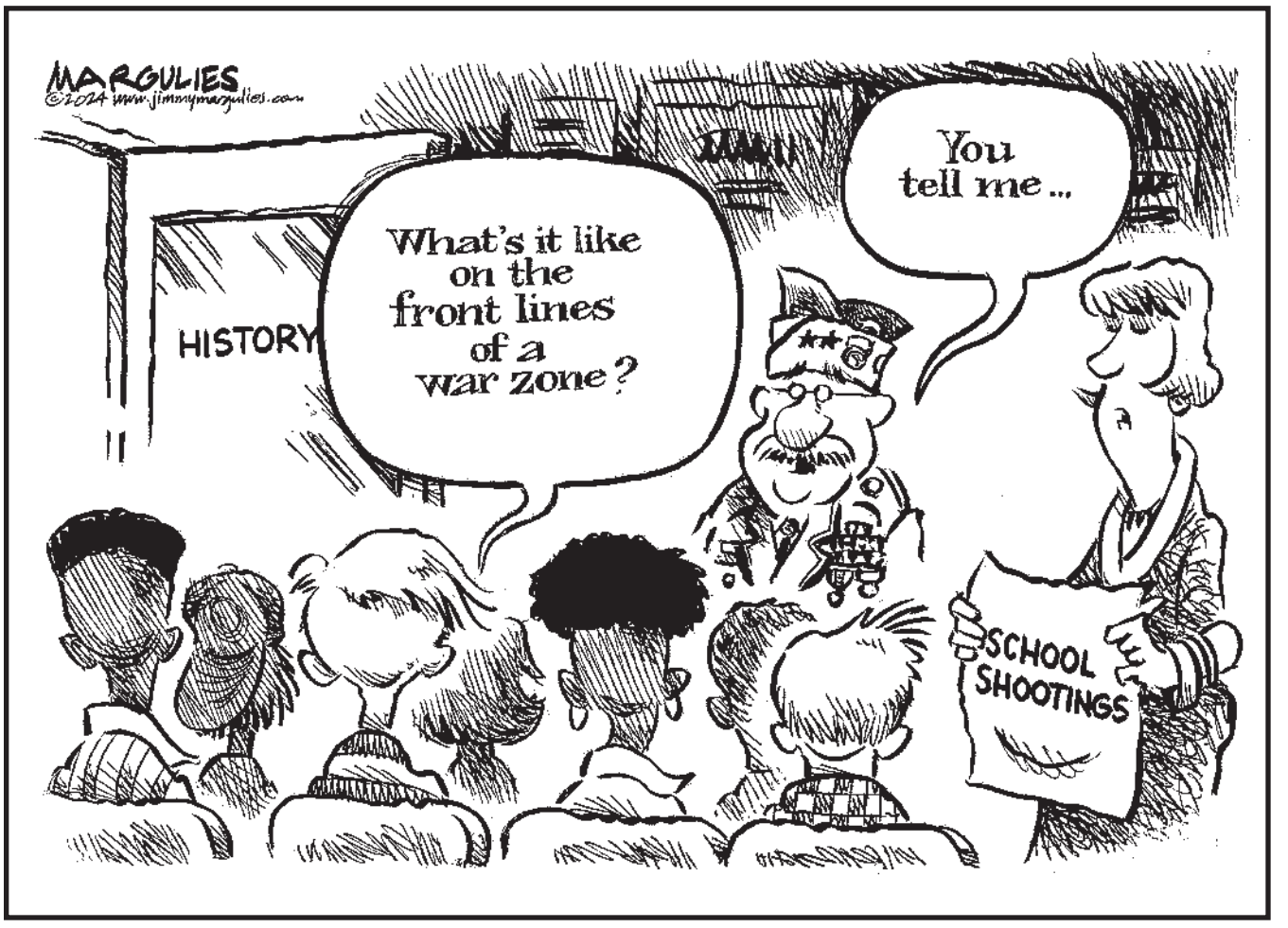

Make daylight saving time permanent? The US economy says yes

By ALLISON SCHRAGER
Bloomberg Opinion

Allison Schrager is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering economics. A senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, she is author of "An Economist Walks Into a Brothel: And Other Unexpected Places to Understand Risk."

President-elect Donald Trump's latest promise is to eliminate Daylight Saving Time, which would mean putting the U.S. on Standard Time year-round.

Billionaire DOGE bosses Elon Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy, meanwhile, seem to want to make Daylight Saving Time permanent. Is this just a miscommunication? Or is the incoming administration as divided on this issue as the rest of America?

Regardless, we all must take a stand. Here is mine: Daylight Saving Time is superior to Standard Time, and it should be adopted year-round.

The purpose of time-keeping is to facilitate economic coordination, and DST better suits our modern economy. If the goal were simply to maximize sleep and physical well-being, we'd all be on our own solar time — with the sun directly overhead at noon. But that would be chaos. If the goal were simply to maximize economic coordination, we'd have just one (or maybe two) time zones. But that would be especially hard on people living near the borders.

America's current system is already a compromise between our corporal and economic needs. Until the General Time Convention of 1883, which established time zones, the U.S. had hundreds of time zones, with each city keeping its own time. The new arrangement brought order and helped budding industries like the telegraph and the railroad coordinate time across geography.

But America's time-keeping took a few steps backward—I speak strictly metaphorically—in the 20th century, when states started requiring people to change their clocks twice a year in a misguided effort to save energy. There has also been political meddling for less high-minded reasons. Meanwhile, two states don't observe DST at all.

On a global level, countries change time on different days, which causes weeks of confusion and lost economic output when it comes to international travel and commerce. There is also something imperial about time-changing, since it is developed countries that tend to change their clocks, putting them further out of sync with developing countries.

Finally, there is the evidence that changing clocks, either forward or back, is bad for our health and our productivity.

But ending this practice raises the question of which time to adopt. America actually did adopt permanent DST during the energy crisis of 1974—and it was unpopular in part because people didn't like sending their kids to school in the dark. The experiment, which was supposed to last two years, was canceled after 10 months.

Things have changed a lot since then. There has been a significant migration to the South in the last half century, meaning there are fewer people who would have to deal with the dark mornings and more businesses that would benefit from lighter evenings.(1) It's not surprising that it is a senator from Florida, Marco Rubio, who has led a years-long crusade to adopt year-round DST.

True, children in the North still would have to go to school in the dark on year-round DST. But unlike the feral children of the 1970s, kids today are more engaged in after-school activities. A lot of them already come home in the dark, to little outcry. At any rate, almost all of today's schoolchildren are equipped with a flashlight — it's on their phones.

For their part, the American Society of Sleep Medicine (located in the far northern state of Illinois) would prefer Standard Time because it is closer to solar time. But unlike the 1970s, when it comes to sleep schedules, more people are better able to keep their own time. Working from home is more common, as are more flexible work (and nap?) schedules.

A couple decades ago, a research paper suggested that one of the main ways Americans kept time was through TV schedules. Nowadays people stream on their TVs or phones. My point is not that we all need to get off Netflix; it's that, while our sleep may not be as sensitive as we once thought to what the clock says, our economic activity is. And our economy would be better off with year-round Daylight Saving Time.

(1) It is also worth noting that some northern states (such as Maine) have already passed resolutions to go on permanent DST.

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Truth 79: Warriors for the people, oversight, disappointment(s)!

By AMBROSE M. BENNETT
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Ambrose M. Bennett is an economist who minored in sociology, political scientist, a retired teacher, and former CNMI Board of Education member, a James Madison Fellow (U.S. constitutional scholar), a Fulbright-Hays and lifetime humanities scholar who resides in Kagman III in the CNMI.

The truth is Ambrose was right and I'm sooo darn glad Star Marianas decided to fought to keep their business, as we need both airlines but there are no warriors fighting for the people, which is at the very core of the challenges to move forward and upward with our economy and quality of life. We also now know this subterfuge to get rid of Star Marianas started with Ralph proving my assertion that "someone powerful in the GOP was pulling the strings"—the stink is louder given it was Ralph and now Arnold is trying to finish the subterfuge with the help of Republicans at CEDA. It also implies that Ralph and/or his brothers may have an interest in the MACS deal as "silent partners." But unlike at Sodom and Gomorrah where there was at least one, it looks dim for the people to have a single elected warrior to stop Republican subterfuge—I truly miss the bishop! I've been fighting for the people since 1998, yet Republicans have forced and breed bigotry among leaders and people to prioritize my past 50 years ago as being mor important than progress with the many issues, I've written about that are adversely affecting the CNMI. We're suffering under Republican bigotry over the need for progress ever since I started writing 26 years ago and locals wonder why the CNMI can't do and be a better place. People know, I've tried to help with many issues that were ignored, which is their proof bigotry is stopping real progress!

I told you so, Arnold was never an independent, as he's joining the Republicans to ride Trump's coattails and even doing "the Trump" asserting "we should incentivize businesses" when he knows he is creating a monopoly, as no one can compete with MACS getting a free ride on taxes. If we are going to offer incentives, I'm sure any real economist will agree that we should incentivizes all airlines who bring in tourists, as "Tourism is our business," not creating a monopoly and why we must stop being poli-tricked by GOP name-switching. Dems can counter Republicans by doing something about their subterfuge or we are left without representation allowing the subterfuge to continue after over two decades under Republicans. The subterfuge won't stop until we the people and our warriors for the people say enough, as Arnold is already setting Dems up to lose against him in the next election—for true!

Democrats haven't fought against anything Republicans are doing, as Democrats even had a chance to stop Ralph before he was elected. They failed to expose the Ambrosio's and other bribes of Democrats to the feds (election crimes)—no fight in them, so we the people and the party lose again! Dems need to know they need to man/woman up to change and make a name fighting for the people, as they are our only hope for real reforms and progress—for true! Greatness is truly waiting for somebody to claim it! Democrats failed to fight and stop the kangaroo trial, as they should have taken the issue to court, not accept Jude's BS stopping Ralph and saving us over $17 million. The oversight after the fact was too little too late when the money is all gone—disappointed for delivering taya! Who and when is someone going to fight to get locals access to their money at MPLT to help locals after 42 years of taya, as it seems only Republican governors can get access yet to be repaid and I'm the only one fighting for locals—sad! I won't even try to explain the lack of Democrat oversight over the Casino Commission that caused the people to lose over $164 million, that people know I tried to prevent—more disappointment. I proved we didn't need the Cannabis Commission, but Democrats failed to fight to stop the waste of our money after austerity and now a budget shortfall—disappointment just continues!

The Democrat chair for the Cannabis Commission only did a bill for government employees not to be tested that he saved for election season just to get re-elected, poli-tricking that worked. But we need the entire industry reformed, as we have lost money every year in the commission's existence. I'm sure the Republican bigotry has gotten to him, as he ghosted me and even refuses to discuss the industry with me. I truly tried to talk with Democrats and him to avoid what you are reading now but they are suffering the bigotry-affliction. I was personally disappointed, as I was his teacher in high school, and I personally saw him change, which was even more disappointing. I taught all my students to be professionals without biases and prejudices but if it can happen to one of my students it can happen to anyone. If the Democrats don't become real warriors for the people to keep the Republicans and the governor in check, they are virtually worthless, which has continued to be reflected in the voting for proof with no Democrat governor since the 1990s, as two decades is a very disappointing showing Dems! Republicans have lulled Democrats to sleep and to even hate me, when I'm one of the GOP's biggest threats, which is why they keep trying to destroy me, as Dems must change in the ultimate team sport of politics!

I missed the public hearing, but I learned it was just about MACS, as they didn't want citizens to connect the dots to Star Marianas' eviction like I did, as it seems CEDA's even lied to the people about creating competition, knowing they were creating a monopoly, which more than justifies oversight before the governor signs. But Dems aren't fighting for the people, just sitting as Arnold's uses his pledge to some Dems not to fire them just to keep Dems in check and from checking him when it clear now that oversight is warranted after the lies being exposed—poli-tricking again! More smoke and mirrors, just like the governor's Small Business Advisory Council Zaldy mentioned that has never been used. I knew when the governor implied CEDA was the experts that poli-tricking was being served to the people—duh! It's clear the governor is fighting back against Ambrose with his assertion of incentivizing businesses which is why locals, especially Dems, need to realize Ambrose and Zaldy can't be the only people placing a check on the governor if we the people are to move forward economically and socially. Republicans won't do anything, and people are even asking me now where are your Dems in the fight for the people? People can see from my list of 33 oversights that something went very wrong—no checks and balances that only Dems can do. We the people need warriors with a backbone in the political arena of our adversarial designed government, not spineless pacifists—just giving out some tough love with no disrespect intended! The proof of subterfuge is in the details of truth, so please wakeup Dems for the people before it's too darn late again!

Animals are someone, not stocking stuffers

By MELISSA RAE SANGER
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals

A few years ago, I heard about a family who had surprised their children with what they thought was the "perfect" Christmas present: a tiny calico kitten named Freya, complete with a big red bow tied loosely around her neck. The kids were delighted and spent hours caring for their new family member. But by New Year's Day, they had lost interest, and the cat care responsibilities fell to the parents. The joy that once filled their holiday quickly turned into regret, and poor Freya was banished to the basement. She lived a lonely, solitary life, all but forgotten by the family who once adored her.

Freya's story is not unique. Every holiday season, animals given as Christmas gifts end up neglected, abandoned or worse. Properly caring for an animal is an enormous responsibility, and many people who receive them as gifts or buy them for their children find that they're unable—or unwilling—to make the lifelong commitment. Animals suffer as a result.

Animals are not toys. They are living beings with unique needs and the potential to live for 15 years or more. Caring for a cat, dog or any animal requires time, money and patience. Animals need and deserve veterinary care, food, exercise and companionship. And those are just the bare minimum. Providing an animal with a good life means giving them daily moments of joy, interesting experiences, respect for their personalities and preferences, and consideration of their best interests.

When animals are given as gifts, the recipient often hasn't had the chance to consider whether they are ready for such a commitment. Are they home enough to care for a social animal like a cat? Do they have the time to walk a dog every day? Can they cover unexpected medical expenses, which can quickly total thousands of dollars? These are not questions that should be answered by someone other than an animal's potential guardian.

Once the novelty wears off, many animals given as gifts are doomed to a miserable existence: locked in a basement, chained outdoors or abandoned on the side of the road in the cold to freeze or starve to death. Others join the millions of animals who enter shelters each year when their unprepared recipient finds them to be more responsibility than they agreed to.

The issue isn't limited to cats and dogs. Small animals like hamsters, guinea pigs, reptiles and birds also have big needs and specific care requirements. For example, rabbits require a lot of space, social interaction and a specialized diet. Without proper care, they can become depressed and develop serious health issues. Many overwhelmed owners release these animals outdoors, where they cannot survive, or surrender them to shelters, where rabbits are the third most common animals.

There's something else to consider. Many animals sold as "gifts" by pet stores and breeders come from cruel mass-breeding factories such as puppy mills, where animals are caged in squalor and deprived of exercise, socialization and veterinary care. Purchasing an animal from one of these places perpetuates neglect and suffering.

If you were considering giving an animal as a gift but have now had a change of heart, the holidays can still be a wonderful time to support a future animal guardian. You can give them supplies such as toys and treats, a book on animal care or even a certificate to cover an adoption from a local animal shelter—allowing them to choose their companion responsibly when the time is right, after the chaotic holiday season is long past.

Animals deserve homes where they are wanted, understood and cared for—not just for Christmas but for their entire lives.

Melissa Rae Sanger is a licensed veterinary technician and a staff writer for the PETA Foundation, 501 Front St., Norfolk, VA 23510; www.PETA.org.

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Manta Ray Battalion completes Christmas Canned Food Drive

The Manta Ray Battalion cadets and their JROTC instructor are again spreading holiday cheer with their annual Christmas Canned Food Drive last Dec. 18.

This initiative, aimed at supporting local needy families, has become a beloved tradition in the community. Cadets have been collecting non-perishable food items throughout November and December, setting an ambitious goal to gather cans of food. The drive encourages donations from the cadets and families.

The Manta Ray Battalion cadets put in effort to ensure that the food they collected provided nourishment and spread holiday cheer. After sorting and organizing the canned food, the cadets decorated festive boxes with bright colors and holiday designs. These specially decorated boxes were then filled with the donated canned food. Once the boxes were ready, Mr. Luis, Mr. Mario, and Mr. Soto from Karidat Social Services picked up the canned goods. The cadets' hard work organizing the food and adding a personal touch through the decorated boxes was a meaningful gesture highlighting the true spirit of giving and the most wonderful time of the year.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Manta Ray Battalion cadets and their JROTC instructor pose after the launch of their Christmas Canned Food Drive last Dec. 18.

"The Manta Ray Battalion would like to thank Mr. Luis, Mr. Mario, and Mr. Soto for visiting the JROTC building to pick up the canned foods and bring them back to Karidat. I would also like to thank the cadets who worked hard to make this canned food drive happen. I appreciate every single one of them. Thank you to those who donated canned goods; even though we couldn't donate a lot, I hope it helps enough," said C/CPT Shanna Villaluz.

"The canned food drive was a fun and rewarding experience. It was great to see everyone coming together and actively participating, creating a strong sense of community. Most importantly, it felt fulfilling to know that our efforts made a difference in helping people in need," said C/CPT Bradley Barce.

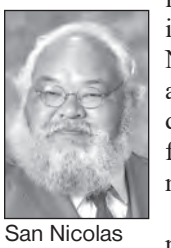
"I'm so glad we could participate in the canned food drive this year and give to those who don't have much for the holidays," said C/CPT Ashley Villagomez.

"In my opinion, the best part about the canned food drive is getting together as a battalion and donating food to those in need, especially during Christmas. It brings everyone together and makes a positive impact," said C/CPT Miyiel Baculod.

Happy Holidays from the Manta Ray JROTC Battalion! ***(PR)***

Legislature passes bill to address facility repairs, equipment procurement for DOC

GUAM—During the final legislative session of the term, the 37th Guam Legislature passed Bill No. 368-37 (LS), which aims to address critical facility repairs and equipment procurement for the Adult Correctional Facility and the Hagatna Detention Facility, marking an important step for the Guam Department of Corrections in their efforts to improve the hazardous conditions in the current correctional facilities.


San Nicolas

"I'm grateful for the support of my colleagues in advancing this legislation, prioritizing the safety of everyone at DOC, and preventing the further deterioration of our correctional facilities," said Sen. San Nicolas. "Funding critical repairs and procuring much-needed equipment are necessary measures we need to take to ensure the safety of our correctional staff, inmates, and the public."

Bill 368-37 initially aimed to amend DOC's Fiscal Year 2025 budget appropriation under Public Law 37-125 and reallocate $5 million originally earmarked for the construction of a new DOC facility to also fund much-needed repairs, maintenance, equipment, and security upgrades at both ACF and HDF. However, during the fourth day of deliberations in the December Legislative Session, San Nicolas decided to amend the bill to reduce the reallocation from $5 million to $1 million instead.

"While $1 million is not what we originally hoped for, it is a good compromise which will still allow DOC some flexibility to do immediate repairs while continuing preparations for a new correctional facility," San Nicolas stated.

The bill, as amended on the floor, received 12 ayes, and is co-sponsored by Sens. Telo T. Taitague, Jesse A. Lujan, Joanne M. Brown, D. Christopher Barnett, Frank Blas, Jr., Sabina Flores Perez, and Speaker Therese M. Terlaje. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

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JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT # 01-2025

Opening date: December 16, 2024 **Closing date: January 03, 2025**

Location:	**SAIPAN**	**SALARY**
Position(s):	(1) AOA Controller-I	PL 5/1 ($8.83/hr. or $18,362.70/annum)
	(1) General Maintenance-I	PL 3/1 ($8.01/hr. or $16,655.51/annum)
Location:	**TINIAN**	**SALARY**
Position(s):	(1) AOA Controller/Ground Maintenance-I	PL 5/1 ($8.83/hr. or $18,362.70/annum)
	(1) General Maintenance-II	PL 5/1 ($8.83/hr. or $18,362.70/annum)
	(1) Tariff Technician-I	PL 4/1 ($8.41/hr. or $17,488.29/annum)
Location:	**ROTA**	**SALARY**
Position(s):	(1) Ports Police/ARFF Trainee	PL 5/1 ($8.83/hr.)
	(1) General Maintenance-II	PL 5/1 ($8.83/hr. or $18,362.70/annum)

Employment Application must be accompanied with a copy of all required diploma/certificates and/or official sealed transcripts, original copy of recent police record not more than six (6) months old, original copy of U.S. Department of Defense Form DD214 for retired members or veterans of our Armed Forces, and other documents as required for the position. Public Law 11-70 requires that all male applicants age 18 to 25 years old must submit documentation evidencing his registration with the Federal Selective Service System. All applications and required documents must be submitted to the ***CPA Administration Office, 2nd Floor Arrival Building, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport or CPA Administration Office, Tinian International Airport, or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport.*** Failure to provide any of the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. Certain vacancies may require written and/or physical test. Selected applicants will be subjected to pre-employment drug screening, 10-year Criminal History Record Check and 49 CFR Part 1542.209(d) Requirements. CPA reserves the right to waive or implement other qualifications to meet its needs. The deadline for submission of applications and required documents to the CPA Administration Office (Saipan) or at the Tinian International Airport or Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport is no later than **5:00 P.M. on Friday, January 03, 2025.**

Detailed information on qualifications and position descriptions for the above positions may be picked up along with the application form from Monday-Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., except on holidays and austerity, at the CPA Administration Office (2nd Floor) of the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, Arrival Terminal or CPA Admin, Office at the Tinian International Airport or at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona International Airport. For additional information, please contact the CPA Human Resources Office by email at lorna.robert@cnmiports.com and hrspecialist@cnmiports.com or by phone at (670)237-6500.

CPA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and CPA hires those who are legally entitled to employment in the CNMI.

FREDERICK A. PANGELINAN
Acting Executive Director

PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT
INVITATION TO BID

ITB NO.: ITB25-BECQ/DEQ-42500026

SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 21, 2025 TIME: 9:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) CLASS "I" VEHICLE FOR THE BECQ-DEQ SAFE DRINKING WATER PROGRAM"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR ACCESS PORTAL (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BLDG. NO. 12386 ASCENCION DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS ITB CAN BE MADE TO MS. RIKKI CAMACHO, FEDERAL GRANTS COORDINATOR VIA EMAIL AT RIKKI.CAMACHO@BECQ.GOV.MP BY JANUARY 09, 2025, BY 4:30 P.M, ChST.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ FLOYD MASGA
ACTING ADMINISTRATOR, BECQ

/S/ BRIEN S. NICHOLAS JR.
ACTING DIRECTOR, P.S.

Business

Crowne Plaza ushers in 2025 with exciting New Year's offers

Celebrate the arrival of 2025 at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan! We are thrilled to announce our much-anticipated New Year's Eve Countdown Party on Dec. 31, from 9pm to 1am. With free entry for everyone, it's the perfect opportunity to gather your family and friends for a memorable start to 2025!

Enjoy party favors for every guest to keep the celebration alive. Savor all your island favorites on our NYE Party menu featuring BBQ beef short ribs, prawns, skewers, and snack favorites like popcorn, pizza, and much more to munch on. Quench your thirst with drinks from our three active bar areas serving beer, bubbles, wine, sodas, and exclusive New Year-themed cocktails.

Experience live entertainment with the High Tide Band keeping the party vibes alive and a special fire dance performance by Tasi & Ali'is.

Exciting raffle prizes await! Participate in our raffles for the chance to win fantastic prizes with plenty of opportunities to walk away as a winner:

- One-night stay in an Ocean View Room with breakfast for two.
- Dinner for two at The Terrace.
- Lunch for two at The Terrace.
- Over 50 consolation prizes!

Be sure not to miss out on our exclusive New Year's Eve Restaurant and Bar Specials! Join us at The Terrace for a New Year's Eve Dinner or New Year's Day Brunch, featuring favorites like tomahawk chops, garlic-studded lamb chops, smoked local catch wrapped in banana leaf, roasted porchetta, seafood on ice, sushi, sashimi, and more! For those with a sweet tooth, we're offering champagne macarons, green tea roulade, raspberry cheesecake and more. Dinner is available on Dec. 31 from 5:30pm to 9:30pm, and brunch is offered on Jan. 1 from 11am to 2pm. Prices are $75 per adult and $25 per child.

At Mari Bar, reserve a table for just $10 for groups of four or more and enjoy a private spot to celebrate with loved ones. Pair your experience with special food and drink packages like Bang Bang Shrimp and Huli Huli Sticky Wings.

At Ataari Dinner Show, delight in a $10 soju special, $20 beer buckets, and a whole roast pig perfect for a last feast of the year.

Meanwhile, Market Place offers $10 Hangover Cure Boxes until midnight to ensure the first day of 2025 starts off just right.

Celebrate with us and ring in the New Year at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan-the perfect spot for fun, food, and festivities!

For more information about our New Year promotions, contact Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan at (670) 234-6412 or visit https://saipan.crowneplaza.com/. You can also make a reservation by emailing Restaurants.CPRSaipan@ihg.com.

Follow us on social media to get the latest updates on all the holiday offers! Facebook/Instagram: @crowneplazaresortsaipan and @theterraceclubsaipan. ***(PR)***

CPRS

Ring in the New Year at Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan–the perfect spot for fun, food, and festivities.

CPRS

Crowne Plaza Resort Saipan's New Year's Eve Countdown Party is free entry for everyone and is the perfect opportunity to gather your family and friends for a memorable start to 2025!

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-25-009

SEWER MAIN AND MANHOLE REPLACEMENT/REHAB/UPGRADE PHASE II

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the construction of the Sewer Main and Manhole Replacement/Rehab/Upgrade Phase II in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project consists of realignment and replacement of the existing 4-inch bypass sewer line in **Capitol Hill Village** along **Capitol Hill Road** with a new 8-inch PVC distribution main. The scope includes the installation of appurtenances, fittings, new manholes with accessories, and the rehabilitation and reconnection of existing manholes, including the replacement of their accessories. All work must be performed in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications, ensuring no disruption to the daily operation of the sewer system. The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) requires the project to be completed within three hundred sixty-five (365) calendar days from the date of contract award.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **December 23, 2024, at 10:00 AM(CHST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies of the bid MUST be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "**CUC-IFB-25-009, SEWER MAIN AND MANHOLE REPLACEMENT/REHAB/UPGRADE PHASE II**" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) January 16, 2025**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time.

Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. **Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.**

A *Bid Guarantee* of not less than fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidder. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 a.m. (CHST) on December 30, 2024** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Joel Puyat, CUC Water/Wastewater Engineer at email joel.puyat@cucgov.org, and to Marcela Tenorio, P&S, Senior Administrative Technician at marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

KEVIN O. WATSON
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

PROJECT NO. CPA-RFP-009-25
SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 14, 2025 (4:00 P.M.)

"AIRPORT BUSINESS AND FINANCE CONSULTANT"

THE BID PACKAGE AND OTHER CONTRACT CONSIDERATIONS IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING DECEMBER 13, 2024 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "AIRPORT BUSINESS AND FINANCE CONSULTANT (RFP-009-25)" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 4:00 P.M., JANUARY 14, 2025. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

FREDERICK PANGELINAN
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: DECEMBER 13, 2024

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950 |
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

INVITATION FOR BID
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-012-24-(REPACKAGED)

SUBMISSION DATE: DECEMBER 27, 2024: 2:00 P.M.

"SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF ONE (1) BRAND NEW 2X4 PICK-UP TRUCK TO THE BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT"

THE BID PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP BEGINNING NOVEMBER 27, 2024 AT THE ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT, COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPON PAYMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100. PAYMENT SHALL BE MADE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, CREDIT CARD, OR U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER. ALL APPLICANTS SHALL PAY THE $100.00 TO RECEIVE A COPY OF THE BID.

BIDDERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF ONE (1) BRAND NEW 2X4 PICK-UP TRUCK TO THE BENJAMIN TAISACAN MANGLONA ROTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT **(IFB-012-24-REPACKAGED)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR **BEFORE 2:00 P.M., DECEMBER 27, 2024. A 10% BID BOND OR CASHIER'S CHECK PAYABLE TO CPA SHALL BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID DOCUMENTS.** BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

FREDERICK PANGELINAN
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

DATE: _____

World

Prayers and tears mark 20 years since Indian Ocean tsunami

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia (AP)—People started gathering in prayer on Thursday and visiting the mass graves in Indonesia's Aceh province to mark 20 years since the massive Indian Ocean tsunami, one of modern history's worst natural disasters.

Many openly wept as they placed flowers at a mass grave in Ulee Lheue village where more than 14,000 unidentified and unclaimed tsunami victims are buried. It is one of several mass graves in Banda Aceh, the capital of Indonesia's northernmost province. It was one of the areas worst-hit by the earthquake and tsunami, along with the district of Aceh Besar.

"We miss them and we still don't know where they are. All we know is that every year we visit the mass grave in Ulee Lhue and Siron," said Muhamad Amirudin, 54, who lost two of his children 20 years ago and has never found their bodies.

"This life is only temporary, so we do our best to be useful to others," Amirudin, visiting the grave with his wife, said.

A powerful 9.1-magnitude earthquake off the coast of the Indonesian island of Sumatra on Dec. 26, 2004, triggered a tsunami that killed around 230,000 people across a dozen countries, reaching as far as East Africa. Some 1.7 million people were displaced, mostly in the four worst-affected countries: Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand.

More than 170,000 people died in Indonesia alone.

Even though 20 years have passed, survivors are still grieving the loved ones they lost to the giant wave that flattened buildings all the way to the provincial capital of Banda Aceh.

Thousands of people gathered to pray at the Baiturrahman Mosque in downtown Banda Aceh. Sirens sounded across the city for three minutes to mark the time of the earthquake that triggered the tsunami.

The infrastructure in Aceh has been rebuilt and is now more resilient than it was before the tsunami struck. Early warning systems have been installed in coastal areas to alert residents of potential tsunamis, providing crucial time to seek safety.

The rebuilding efforts were made possible by the support of international donors and organizations, who contributed significant funds to help the region recover. Schools, hospitals, and essential infrastructure that were destroyed by the disaster have been reconstructed with enhanced strength and durability, ensuring better preparedness for future challenges.

In Thailand, people gathered at a memorial ceremony in Ban Nam Khem, a small fishing village in Phang Nga province that bore the brunt of the devastating waves.

The tsunami also claimed the lives of over 8,000 people in Thailand, including many who remain missing, leaving a deep scar on the nation's history. Nearly 400 bodies remain unclaimed.

Mourners shed tears and comforted each other as they laid flowers at the village's tsunami memorial. Around 300 people joined a modest ceremony with Muslim, Christian and Buddhist and prayers.

Urai Sirisuk said she avoids the seaside memorial park the rest of the year, because the loss of her 4-year-old daughter still cuts deep every time she's reminded of it.

"I have this feeling that the sea has taken my child. I'm very angry with it. I can't even put my foot in the water," she said.

But, she said, "I still hear her voice in my ears, that she's calling for me. I can't abandon her. So I have to be here, for my child."

Azerbaijani airliner crashes in Kazakhstan, killing 38 with 29 survivors

An Azerbaijani airliner with 67 people onboard crashed Wednesday near the Kazakhstani city of Aktau, killing 38 people and leaving 29 survivors, a Kazakh official said.

Deputy Prime Minister Kanat Bozumbaev disclosed the figures while meeting with Azerbaijani officials, the Russian news agency Interfax reported.

The Embraer 190 was en route from the Azerbaijani capital of Baku to the Russian city of Grozny in the North Caucasus when it was diverted and attempted an emergency landing 3 kilometers (1.8 miles) from Aktau, Azerbaijan Airlines said.

Speaking at a news conference, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said that it was too soon to speculate on the reasons behind the crash, but said that the weather had forced the plane to change from its planned course.

"The information provided to me is that the plane changed its course between Baku and Grozny due to worsening weather conditions and headed to Aktau airport, where it crashed upon landing," he said.

Russia's civil aviation authority, Rosaviatsia, said that preliminary information showed that the pilots diverted to Aktau after a bird strike led to an emergency on board.

According to Kazakh officials, those aboard the plane included 42 Azerbaijani citizens, 16 Russian nationals, six Kazakhs and three Kyrgyzstan nationals. Azerbaijan's prosecutor general's office previously said that 32 of the 67 people on board had survived the crash, but told journalists that the number wasn't final.

The Associated Press could not immediately reconcile the difference between the numbers of survivors given by Kazakhstan and Azerbaijani officials.

Mobile phone footage circulating online appeared to show the aircraft making a steep descent before smashing into the ground in a fireball. Other footage showed part of its fuselage ripped away from the wings and the rest of the aircraft, lying upside in the grass. The footage corresponded to the plane's colors and its registration number.

Some of the videos posted on social media showed survivors dragging fellow passengers away from the wreckage. ***(AP)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT RUNWAY REHABILITATION REPACKAGING PROJECT PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-004-20 *(AIP PENDING)*

AMENDED REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR SAFETY RISK MANAGEMENT FACILITATOR

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is a public corporation and autonomous agency of the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). In accordance with its Procurement Rules and Regulations, CPA is seeking statements of qualifications from qualified and experienced firms (individually or collectively) to provide professional consulting services for Safety Risk Management (SRM) facilitation support, in conjunction with the upcoming Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport Runway Rehabilitation Repackaging Project, No. CPA-SA-004-20 (AIP pending).

The project is being funded by U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and is in accordance and compliance with CPA's Procurement Rules and Regulations, Section 40-50-202, Architect-Engineer Design and Construction Management Services.

The Request for Qualification (RFQ) Package is available at CPA's Administration Office, 2nd floor of the arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport. No fee is required for obtaining the RFQ package. Electronic copies may be made available upon written request to Ms. Wendi Prater, CPA's CIP Administrator, at wprater@cnmiports.com.

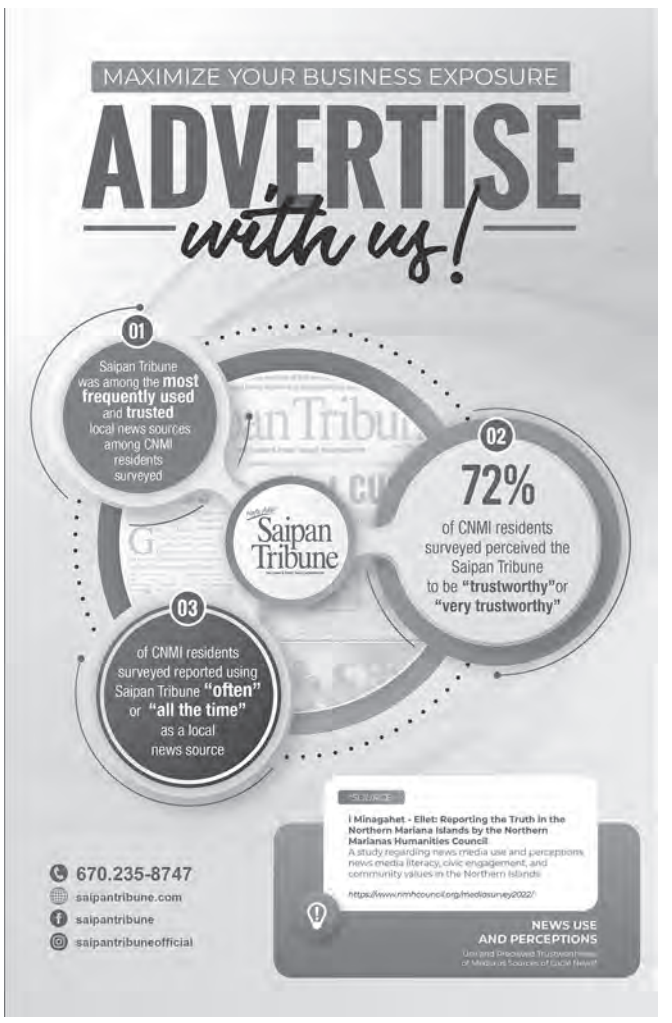
Questions regarding this solicitation must be submitted to Ms. Wendi L. Prater via the email address above or may be hand delivered to the CPA Administration Office by no later than 5:00 p.m. CHST, Friday, January 10, 2025.

The statements of professional qualification will be evaluated based on the criteria available in the RFQ package.

Interested Consultants are requested to submit one (1) original, four (4) copies and one (1) electronic version in .pdf of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **5:00 p.m. CHST, FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2025.** It is preferable that statements of qualification be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

/s/ FREDERICK A. PANGELINAN
Acting Executive Director
Date: December 23, 2024


MAXIMIZE YOUR BUSINESS EXPOSURE
ADVERTISE with us!
01
Saipan Tribune was among the most frequently used and trusted local news sources among CNMI residents surveyed
02
72%
of CNMI residents surveyed perceived the Saipan Tribune to be "trustworthy"or "very trustworthy"
03
of CNMI residents surveyed reported using Saipan Tribune "often" or "all the time" as a local news source
Saipan Tribune
670.235-8747
saipantribune.com
saipantribune
saipantribuneofficial
SOURCE
i Minagahet - Ellet: Reporting the Truth in the Northern Mariana Islands by the Northern Marianas Humanities Council
A study regarding news media use and perceptions, news media literacy, civic engagement, and community values in the Northern Islands
NEWS USE AND PERCEPTIONS

DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB25-DCCA/DYS-42500023

SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 13, 2025 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF ONE (1) CLASS "J" VEHICLE FOR DCCA, DIVISION OF YOUTH SERVICES, SAIPAN"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR ACCESS PORTAL AT (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BUILDING NO. 12386, ASCENCION DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

FOR ANY **QUESTIONS** REGARDING THIS ITB, PLEASE CONTACT VIVIAN T. SABLAN, DYS ADMINISTRATOR, VIA EMAIL AT vtsablan@dys.gov.mp BY **4:30 P.M., ChST., JANUARY 06, 2025.**

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ Francisco M. Rabauliman
SECRETARY, DCCA

/S/ Brien S. Nicholas, Jr.
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
CNMI GOVERNMENT
Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, 2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
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Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (670) 234-5962
Website: www.cnmiports.com

INVITATION FOR BID
PROJECT NO. CPA-IFB-002-25-(REPACKAGED)

SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 16, 2025 (2:00 P.M.)

"SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF 30 UNITS SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS"

THE PROPOSAL PACKAGE IS AVAILABLE FOR PICK UP AT THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY (CPA) ACCOUNTING OFFICE, 2ND FLOOR, DEPARTURE BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT BEGINNING DECEMBER 17, 2024. AN ADMINISTRATIVE FEE OF $100.00 SHALL BE PAID TO CPA BEFORE A BIDDER MAY OBTAIN THE BID PACKAGE. PAYMENTS SHALL BE IN CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK, OR CREDIT CARD.

PROPOSERS ARE TO SUBMIT ONE (1) ORIGINAL AND TWO (2) COPIES IN A SEALED ENVELOPE AND MARKED "SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF 30 UNITS SELF-CONTAINED BREATHING APPARATUS **(RFP-002-25)-(REPACKAGED)**" TO THE OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, 2ND FLOOR, ARRIVAL BUILDING, SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT ON OR BEFORE 2:00 P.M., JANUARY 16, 2025. BIDDERS SHALL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATIONS ALL CHARGES ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROCUREMENT BEFORE FINALIZING ITS BID PRICE.

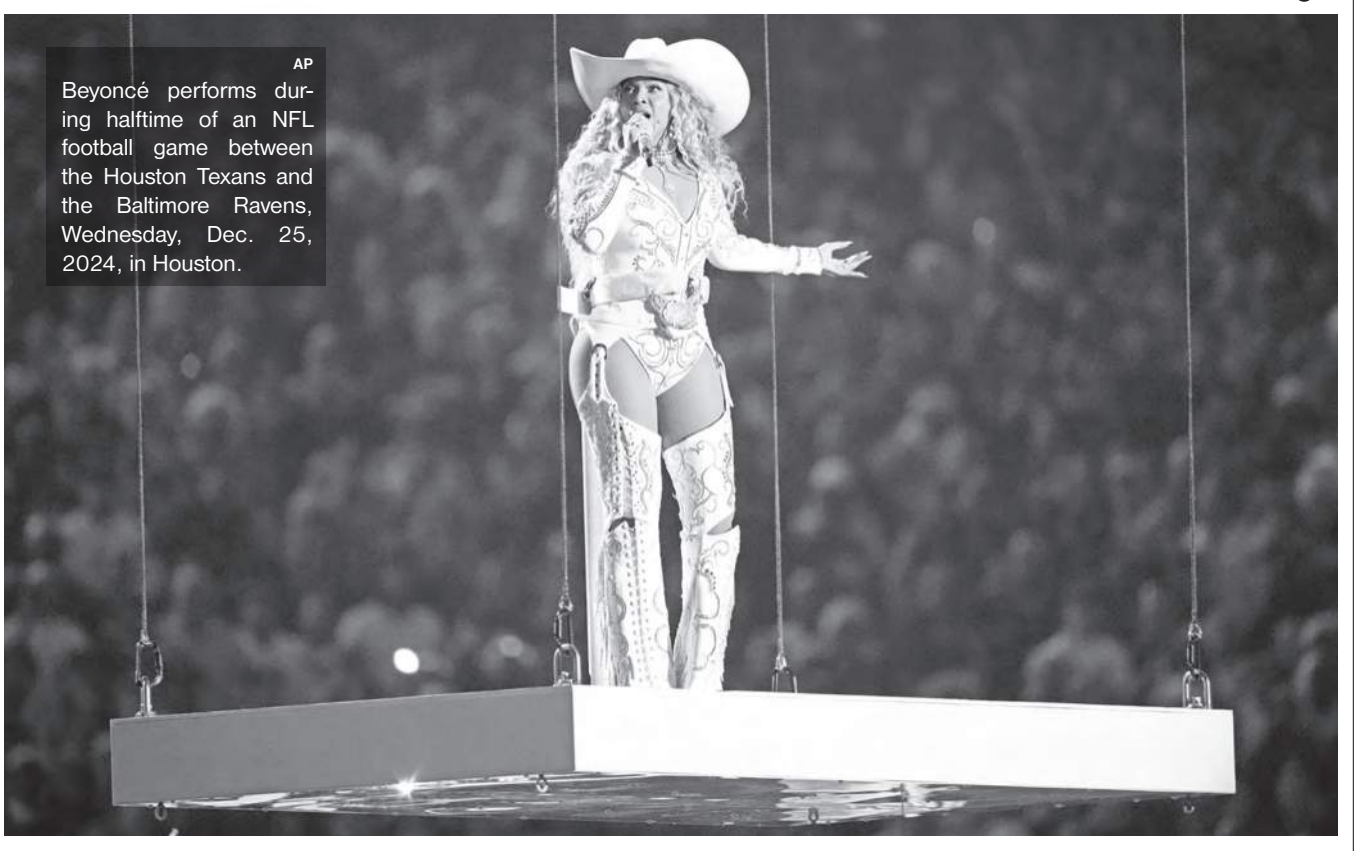
THE PROVISIONS OF THE CPA PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION §40-50-1020 AND 1025 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CPA RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS OR PROPOSALS, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF CPA.

FREDERICK PANGELINAN
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DATE: _____

Life & Style

Beyoncé's performance highlighted Netflix's NFL debut on Christmas Day



AP

Beyoncé performs during halftime of an NFL football game between the Houston Texans and the Baltimore Ravens, Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2024, in Houston.

By ROB MAADDI
AP PRO FOOTBALL WRITER

Beyoncé provided more excitement than either game during Netflix's NFL debut on Christmas Day.

Riding into her halftime appearance on a white horse, the 32-time Grammy winner rocked her hometown Houston crowd with a nearly 13-minute performance on Wednesday.

She surprised fans by bringing out Shaboozey to perform "Sweet Honey Buckiin" and Post Malone joined her for "Levii's Jeans."

The action on the field didn't live up to expectations as the NFL showcased four of the AFC's top five teams.

Patrick Mahomes and Travis Kelce exposed a glitch in Pittsburgh's defense during Kansas City's 29-10 rout in the first game.

The broadcast itself went off just fine, quickly becoming the second-most popular live title on Netflix to date, according to NFL Media.

Lamar Jackson and the Ravens led C.J. Stroud and the Texans 17-2 at halftime before Beyoncé stole the show. Baltimore finished off the 31-2 victory with Jackson resting most of the fourth quarter.

Mariah Carey opened the football doubleheader with a taped performance of "All I Want for Christmas is You" and then the two-time defending Super Bowl champion Chiefs trounced the Steelers to clinch the No. 1 seed in the AFC.

There were no signs of any major streaming issues during the game after Netflix experienced minor blunders at the start of the pregame show. The broadcast opened with roughly 10 seconds of silence because it appeared studio host Kay Adams' microphone wasn't turned on.

Beyoncé's live performance at NRG Stadium was supposed to be the biggest test for the streaming giant and it seemed to go off without a hitch.

Mahomes threw for 320 yards and three touchdowns and Kelce had eight catches for 84 yards and one score as the Chiefs (15-1) earned a first-round bye and home-field advantage throughout the AFC playoffs. The Steelers (10-6) have lost three straight games and may have to settle for a wild-card spot.

Jackson tossed two touchdown passes and ran for a score and Derrick Henry had 147 yards rushing and one TD to help the Ravens (11-5) move into first place in the AFC North, one game ahead of Pittsburgh.

Netflix agreed to a three-year contract in May to broadcast Christmas Day games. The NFL is expected to give the streaming service one of its biggest days since the site launched in 1998.

Richard Perry, record producer behind 'You're So Vain' and other hits, dies at 82

By HILLEL ITALIE AP
NATIONAL WRITER

Richard Perry, a hitmaking record producer with a flair for both standards and contemporary sounds whose many successes included Carly Simon's "You're So Vain," Rod Stewart's "The Great American Songbook" series and a Ringo Starr album featuring all four Beatles, died Tuesday. He was 82.

Perry, a recipient of a Grammys Trustee Award in 2015, died at a Los Angeles hospital after suffering cardiac arrest, friend Daphna Kastner said.

"He maximized his time here," said Kastner, who called him a "father friend" and said he was godfather to her son. "He was generous, fun, sweet and made the world a better place. The world is a little less sweeter without him here. But it's a little bit sweeter in heaven."

Perry was a onetime drummer, oboist and doo-wop singer who proved at home with a wide variety of musical styles, the rare producer to have No. 1 hits on the pop, R&B, dance and country charts. He was on hand for Harry Nilsson's "Without You" and The Pointer Sisters' "I'm So Excited," Tiny Tim's novelty smash "Tiptoe Through the Tulips" and the Willie Nelson-Julio Iglesias lounge standard "To All the Girls I've Loved Before." Perry was widely known as a "musician's producer," treating artists like peers rather than vehicles for his own tastes. Singers turned to him whether trying to update their sound (Barbra Streisand), set back the clock (Stewart), revive their career (Fats Domino) or fulfill early promise (Leo Sayer).

"Richard had a knack for matching the right song to the right artist," Streisand wrote in her 2023 memoir, "My Name is Barbra."

Perry's life was a story, in part, of famous friends and the right places. He was backstage for 1950s performances by Little Richard and Chuck Berry, sat in the third row at the 1967 Monterey Pop Festival during Otis Redding's memorable set and attended a recording session for the Rolling Stones' classic "Let It Bleed" album. A given week might find him dining one night with Paul and Linda McCartney, and Mick and Bianca Jagger the next. He dated Elizabeth Taylor and Jane Fonda among others and was briefly married to the actor Rebecca Broussard.

AP

Producer Richard Perry poses for a photo in Los Angeles, Jan. 18, 1982.

Wife is unhappy with her birthday 'gifts'—and the giver

DEAR ABBY: My husband took me on a trip for my birthday this year, only he didn't prepare for anything other than some sightseeing events. He didn't help plan for camping, didn't financially plan well for souvenirs or if we wanted to eat out, and had a crappy attitude the entire time. We got into an argument at almost every event we went to because he either disagreed with my preferences or pushed back at my calling him out for pouting.

I'm upset because this was supposed to have been a "makeup" trip from him for ruining my birthday years prior, and for pretty awful fights we were having leading up to my birthday. I had tried to back out, but he convinced me to go. My actual birthday was the day after we got home. He ignored me the entire day, and we got into another argument. We had a few friends over, but overall, I was pretty upset and felt unloved by him.

When I addressed it the next day, he told me no one should get a "birthday week" and called me ungrateful and unappreciative of his efforts. Am I wrong for being upset? This was supposed to be his birthday gift to me, but it felt more like I took him on a trip he didn't even want to be on.

BIRTHDAY GIRL IN MICHIGAN

DEAR GIRL: It is possible your expectations surrounding your birthdays may be, in your husband's opinion, grandiose. Have you two been arguing about more subjects than birthday celebrations, and if so, for how long?

Speaking safely from the sidelines in order to avoid the crossfire, I suggest you ask your doctor (or health insurance company) to recommend some licensed marriage and family counselors. There are healthier ways to manage conflict in relationships than the way you two are doing it.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have a problem with my daughter-in-law. I know she loves me, but I don't think she likes me. An example: Yesterday, I met her and my son at my granddaughter's dance recital. When I entered and sat down next to them, she barely looked up from her phone, yet when another mother arrived, she leapt up and chatted for minutes.

This kind of thing happens often. When we are alone together, she chats with me, but if someone else is in the group, it's like I'm not even there. I have no other complaints about her. She is a terrific mom and partner to my son. Should I talk to her about this? How do I bring it up without making her defensive?

IGNORED IN CALIFORNIA

DEAR IGNORED: I don't doubt that your daughter-in-law loves you. However, she may be so comfortable around you that she's treating you like family ... in other words, taking you for granted. She jumps up when she sees her contemporaries because she doesn't see them as often as she sees you, and they may have fresh news to talk about. Be grateful that when you are alone you communicate well. I don't think there is anything positive to be gained by approaching her with this.

■■■■

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

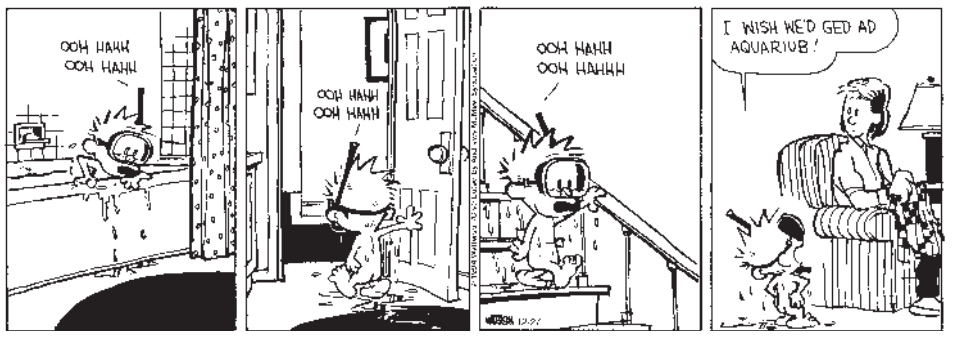
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

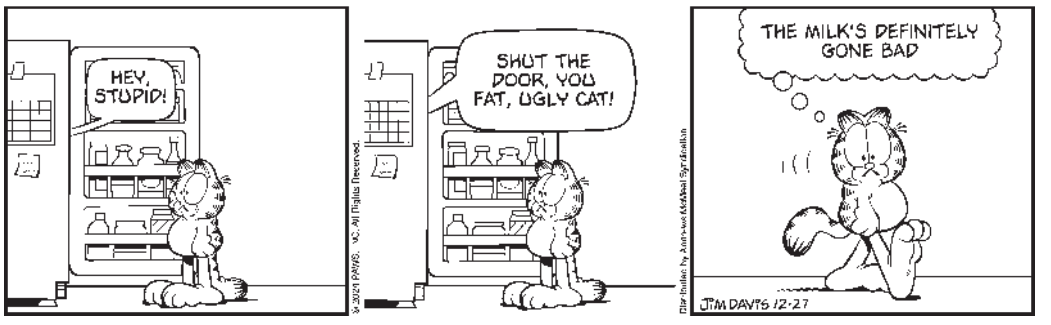
Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

ARE YOU HAPPY WITH WHAT SANTA BROUGHT YOU?
MEH.
ANOTHER YEAR. NO PONY, HUH?
YEP.
YOU SEEM ODDLY CALM.
SHH. I'M WRITING UP A CLASS-ACTION LAWSUIT AGAINST SANTA.
12-27

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

I CAN'T DECIDE BETWEEN THE MAC N' CHEESE AND THE CHICKEN NUGGETS.
WHAT WOULD YOU SUGGEST?
A SUPPLEMENTAL INCOME AND A SENSE OF SHAME.

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Patch target
4 Karate blow
8 Sacred chests
12 Flying saucer
13 River to the Rhine
14 Cowboy's footwear
15 Pastry store
17 — fide (genuine)
18 Prior nights
19 Up to now
20 Sugar units
22 Dalmatian feature
24 "East of Eden" son
25 Workers' jargon
29 Australian state (Abbr.)
30 Hilton heiress
31 Maui souvenir
32 Discuss
34 Latin 101 word
35 Fresh
36 Stage
37 Celtic priest
40 Reddish horse
41 Barbecue order
42 Cook the pie too long
46 Suit to —
47 Departed
48 Bill's partner
49 "Tootsie" actress Teri
50 Tennis barriers
51 Bro's kin

DOWN

1 Barbecue coating
2 "— tree falls ..."
3 Hawaiian raw fish dish
4 Attorney's load
5 Scoffing laughs
6 Spanish gold
7 Zing
8 "— Elementary" (TV sitcom)
9 Santa's runway
10 Coffee-growing area of Hawaii
11 Luminary
16 Squared
19 Soaks (up)
20 Quitter's word
21 Celestial bear
22 Mouselike mammal
23 Fruit in a French tart
25 Goalie's goal
26 Annual fact books
27 Meadows
28 Toy with a tail
30 Frogs' hangout
33 Type of roll
34 Melville's captain
36 Dessert wines
37 Bummer
38 Oscar winner Moreno
39 Taxi alternative
40 Flat fee?
42 Have
43 Churchill gesture
44 Japanese carp
45 Daybreak goddess

Solution time: 25 mins.

S	T	O	W		S	Y	R		T	S	A	R
L	E	A	H		C	O	E		E	L	S	A
A	L	F	A		R	O	D		N	E	A	P
P	E	S	T	L	E		U	R	D	U		
			N	E	W	S	C	A	S	T	E	R
G	E	N	O	A		L	E	T		H	E	E
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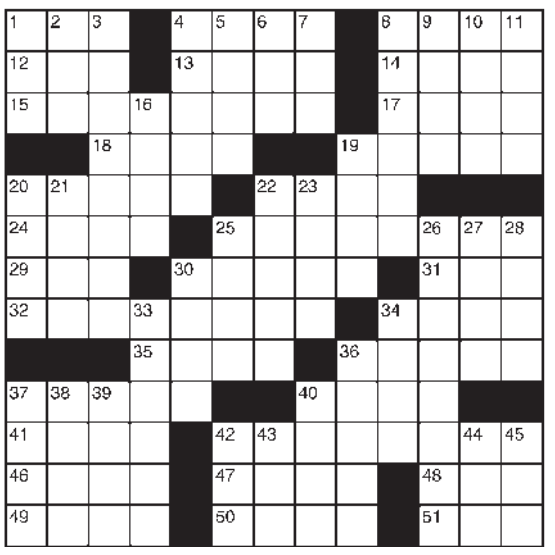
T	A	K	E		D	E	N		R	E	A	M

Yesterday's answer 12-27



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Timothee Chalamet, 29; Hayley Williams, 36; Wilson Cruz, 51; Savannah Guthrie, 53.

Happy Birthday: Stop wasting time. Life is yours to discover. Follow your heart, do whatever you feel passionate about and make each day memorable. Calling the shots and managing your life is up to you. Take the initiative, and you will find a way to use what you enjoy doing to sustain your preferred lifestyle. Let go of negativity and replace it with a positive attitude and an open heart in pursuit of happiness. Your numbers are 6, 14, 22, 26, 31, 36, 45.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Take time to learn, gather information and discover trends to help you get ahead. Your downfall will be cutting corners when time and precision are essential. Slow down and watch what matters; you will surpass your goals and impact those around you. Personal growth is favored. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Set sail for your destination of choice and enjoy the ride. You have plenty to gain and learn from the experiences you encounter. Sitting still instead of making progress will create tension and personal problems with someone you need in your corner. Replace anger with accomplishment. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Don't second-guess yourself when you should question what others want you to do. Take pleasure in expressing yourself, your desires and your plans; you'll gain respect and the help you need from those heading in a similar direction. Own the spotlight and be a leader, and doors will open. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Refrain from putting limitations on yourself. Let your experience and desire lead the way, and you will be happy with the outcome. Choose to use your imagination, which will separate you from any competition. Put your energy where it counts, and it will make the most difference. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* You've got the stamina to do something great. Engage in events that build you up and command the confidence to explicitly target what you want and carry you to the winner's circle. Trust and believe in your ability; nothing will stop you from getting what you want. Romance is featured. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Troubles will mount at home or work if you let your emotions come between you and making good decisions. Be wary of anyone trying to tempt you with excessive behavior or lure you into believing what isn't factual. Reach your conclusions by summarizing facts and getting what you want in writing. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Look at trends and see how to apply them to something you want to pursue. An open mind and dialogue will stimulate your thinking and encourage you to trust your instincts as you follow your dreams. Refuse to let laziness take over when victory is what you need. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* Coast along, enjoy the ride and live in the moment. Your encounters will be eye-opening and encourage you to incorporate new ideas, concepts and trends into your daily routine. Choose a positive attitude and healthy lifestyle, and everything will fall into place. Let go of the past and embrace change. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Be an influencer, speak the truth and demonstrate what you can do. Build your brand and be ready to face off with those trying to beat you at your own game. You know the rules and how to navigate your way to the top. Do your thing and enjoy the ride. ✪✪✪✪

CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Leave nothing undone. It's up to you to make things happen. Justice and fair play are essential to feel good about finding your path to victory. Put your life in perspective, and you'll recognize what you want and the best way to turn your dream into a reality. ✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Set a budget and work toward making your life easier and your space more accommodating. Feeling good about yourself and your surroundings will boost your confidence, morale and ability to sell yourself to potential followers. Set your target, and don't stop until you reach your goal. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Show a little passion, and you'll have an impact on those you want to impress. Make your presentation failproof by sticking to the facts and fulfilling your promises. A change is long overdue. It's time to lead the way instead of taking orders from someone you know you can outmaneuver. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are optimistic, calculating and perceptive. You are mysterious and wary.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects. ✪✪✪✪✪: Nothing can stop you; go for gold.

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

5					6			
9			5	1	2			
		8		4			1	2
		9					6	
					5	7		
	4		1	7				
							4	9
6	1							
	9		7	6				3

Difficulty: ★★★★ 12/27

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

1	8	7	4	9	5	6	2	3
3	6	9	1	8	2	4	5	7
5	2	4	6	7	3	8	9	1
8	1	5	7	6	9	2	3	4
7	4	3	5	2	8	1	6	9
2	9	6	3	1	4	5	7	8
4	3	2	9	5	1	7	8	6
9	7	8	2	4	6	3	1	5
6	5	1	8	3	7	9	4	2

Difficulty: ★★★ 12/26

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WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

EATING ON THE GO Solution: 6 letters

S	U	B	W	A	Y	R	E	N	I	A	T	N	O	C
N	K	A	B	O	B	S	L	A	E	M	T	A	O	G
A	C	C	W	S	O	D	A	T	I	J	A	F	C	R
C	U	H	A	M	B	U	R	G	E	R	F	R	A	E
K	R	H	L	Ⓟ	T	S	A	O	T	E	O	J	T	E
S	T	C	K	Ⓘ	K	B	A	N	E	I	L	E	R	N
G	D	I	I	Ⓣ	T	C	A	R	S	H	E	R	A	S
N	O	W	N	Ⓐ	L	R	A	S	R	S	D	K	N	L
I	O	D	G	E	U	W	A	B	A	U	U	Y	S	E
L	F	N	G	A	R	N	L	T	B	S	R	O	I	E
E	N	A	T	E	T	W	R	A	P	E	T	G	T	H
V	B	S	P	E	R	P	L	A	E	M	S	U	A	W
A	E	P	A	D	E	R	A	P	E	R	P	R	N	N
R	U	S	H	A	W	A	R	M	A	A	E	T	U	I
T	U	R	N	O	V	E	R	S	T	E	K	C	O	P

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Backpack, Bagel, Bars, Cereal, Coffee, Container, Croissant, Fajita, Food Truck, Greens, Hamburger, Jerky, Kabob, Meal Prep, Meals, Oatmeal, Pinwheels, Pita, Pockets, Prepared, Purse, Restaurant, Sandwich, Shawarma, Snacks, Soda, Strudel, Subway, Sushi, Taco, Tart, Teas, Toast, Transit, Traveling, Tupperware, Turnovers, Walking, Wrap, Yogurt

Yesterday's Answer: Pies

For **WONDERWORD** apps, books & more, visit Wonderword.com, or call 1-855-232-2367.

Reaves' layup allows Lakers to escape Warriors

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Austin Reaves scored the winning layup with one second left after Stephen Curry tied it on a 31-foot 3-pointer with seven seconds remaining, LeBron James had 31 points and 10 assists playing in his NBA-record 19th Christmas Day game, and the Los Angeles Lakers held off the Golden State Warriors 115-113 on Wednesday night.

Curry scored 38 with eight 3s, hitting one under pressure from the baseline with 12 seconds left and another with 2:49 remaining only for James to answer from long range on the other end.

Reaves recorded a triple-double with 26 points, 10 rebounds and 10 assists for the Lakers, who lost big man Anthony Davis to a sprained left ankle late in the first quarter.

Takeaways

Lakers: D'Angelo Russell was out with a sprained left thumb. Center Jaxson Hayes played some 3-on-3 against the coaching staff and is progressing from a sprained right ankle that has sidelined him since mid-November.

Warriors: Golden State lost for the 11th time in 14 games. ... Green was hit with his eighth technical late in the second quarter, putting him halfway to the 16 mark that would bring an automatic one-game suspension.

Key moment

With James running right at him, Curry coolly sunk a 3 at the 10:59 mark of the second quarter before James hit from deep 17 seconds later.

AP

Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James (23) drives to the basket against Golden State Warriors guard Brandin Podziemski (2) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2024, in San Francisco

The two superstars also battled on Christmas in 2015, 2016 and 2018 after the Warriors and James' former Cavaliers faced off in the NBA Finals.

Key stat

Curry became the seventh player in NBA history with at least 11 starts on Dec. 25, joining James, Kobe Bryant, Shaquille O'Neal, Dwyane Wade, Russell Westbrook and Kevin Durant.

James earned his 11th win on Dec. 25, passing former teammate Wade's holiday record.

KNICKS 117, SPURS 114

NEW YORK (AP)—Mikal Bridges scored a season-high 41 points, and the New York Knicks overcame 42 from Victor Wembanyama in a monster Christmas debut to edge the San Antonio Spurs 117-114 on Wednesday.

Wembanyama set a Spurs' record for points on the holiday and added 18 rebounds, four assists and four blocked shots. The reigning Western Conference player of the week made six 3-pointers.

But Bridges shot 17 for 25 from the field, 6 for 9 behind the arc, to make sure the Knicks had just enough offense to win their fifth in a row and improve to 20-10.

Karl-Anthony Towns added 21 points and nine rebounds, and Jalen Brunson scored 20 points. Josh Hart finished with 12 points, 12 boards and six assists.

Jeremy Sochan had 21 points and nine rebounds for the Spurs.

TIMBERWOLVES 105, MAVERICKS 99

DALLAS (AP)—Anthony Edwards scored 26 points, and Minnesota held on for a Christmas Day victory over Dallas after superstar Luka Doncic left the game with a strained left calf.

A rematch of last season's Western Conference finals won by Dallas fell flat when Doncic pulled up lame while running a play late in the second quarter Wednesday. Then it got wild when the Mavs erased almost all of a 28-point deficit in the second half.

The five-time All-Star never made it back to the defensive end and limped off the court after Dallas called timeout. It was Doncic's second game back after missing two with a left heel contusion.

Kyrie Irving scored 39 points but was short on a 3-pointer that would have put the Mavs ahead in the final minute after they trailed by 28 late in the third quarter. Doncic scored 14 points.

Rudy Gobert had 14 points and 10 rebounds.

76ERS 118, CELTICS 114

BOSTON (AP)—Joel Embiid popped up from a pregame fall and scored 27 points with nine rebounds, making 4 of 5 from 3-point range and sinking a pair of free throws with 3 seconds left to turn back Boston's final rally and lead the Philadelphia to a victory.

Tyrese Maxey had 33 points and 12 assists. He scored 13 in the fourth quarter, including a quick-trigger layup to open a seven-point lead with about a minute left after the Sixers inbounded the ball with 1.1 seconds on the shot clock. Caleb Martin scored 23, hitting 7 of 9 from 3-point range.

Jayson Tatum scored 32 with 15 rebounds for Boston, Jaylen Brown scored 23 and Derrick White had 21. Boston wore red socks and leggings with their green jerseys for an extra dose of Christmas spirit.

Celtics center Kristaps Porzingis, who has missed all but nine games this season with injuries, did not return for the second half. The team said he had an ankle injury.

SUNS 110, NUGGETS 100

PHOENIX (AP)—Kevin Durant and Bradley Beal each scored 27 points and Phoenix beat Denver in the nightcap to the NBA's Christmas slate of games.

The Nuggets blew out Phoenix 117-90 on Monday night in Denver, but the Suns put up much more of a fight despite playing without Devin Booker (groin) and Grayson Allen (concussion protocol).

Phoenix led by seven after three quarters and stretched it to 99-81 by the midpoint of the fourth quarter. The Suns pushed the lead to 15 and held off the Nuggets down the stretch to end a three-game losing streak.

Nikola Jokic had 25 points and 15 rebounds to lead the Nuggets. Michael Porter Jr. added 22 and Russell Westbrook had 17.

Jamal Murray had 13 points, six rebounds and six assists after missing the game Monday game with a sprained ankle.

Heat list Butler as doubtful for Thursday as speculation about his future intensifies

MIAMI (AP)—The Miami Heat are listing Jimmy Butler as doubtful for their game Thursday at Orlando, saying he needs time to recondition before returning to the lineup.

Butler did not fly with the team to Orlando on Wednesday night, and his intentions for future games seem a bit unclear as well.

Butler has not asked the Heat to be moved, but ESPN, citing sources it did not name, reported Wednesday that the six-time All-Star wants a trade by the league's Feb. 6 deadline and is open to joining teams such as Phoenix, Golden State, Houston and Dallas.

The primary colors of those teams' uniforms include orange, yellow, red and blue. Butler's hair, perhaps not coincidentally, has been tinged in those colors at times in recent weeks.

"I actually like it," Butler said earlier this month when asked about being linked to trade talks and speculation. "It's good to be talked about. I don't think there's such a thing as bad publicity—to a point."

Miami, if it doesn't trade Butler, would run the risk of potentially losing him for nothing as a free agent next summer.

It is the latest twist in a long-running saga involving Butler's future with the Heat, one that began picking up steam back in May when Heat president Pat Riley was noncommittal about giving Butler an extension over the summer.

Butler is eligible for an extension that would guarantee him $113 million for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 seasons. But he is 35 and misses, on average, about one out of every four games in his Heat tenure.

"That's a big decision on our part to commit those kinds of resources unless you have somebody who's going to be there and available every single night," Riley said in May. "That's the truth."

Riley also chided Butler after last season for saying that if he hadn't gotten hurt during the play-in tournament, teams like Boston and New York would have lost to Miami.

"I thought, 'Is that Jimmy trolling or is that Jimmy serious?' If you're not on the court playing against Boston or on the court playing against the New York Knicks, you should keep your mouth shut on the criticism of those teams," Riley said last spring.

Butler twisted an ankle in Miami's loss to Oklahoma City on Friday but missed the remainder of that game and the next two Heat games—at Orlando last Saturday and against Brooklyn on Monday—with illness, not the ankle, cited as the reason.

Butler has helped Miami make the NBA Finals twice in his Heat tenure. He is averaging 18.5 points, 5.8 rebounds and 4.9 assists this season.

Heat lose guard Dru Smith for remainder of season with torn Achilles

Miami Heat guard Dru Smith has suffered another season-ending injury, this one a torn Achilles in his left leg.

Smith got hurt Monday night in Miami's 110-95 win over Brooklyn. The Achilles tear was the preliminary diagnosis once he left the court for evaluation, and an MRI exam on Tuesday confirmed the severity of the injury.

It's his third season-ending issue since February 2022. This injury comes 13 months after he was lost for most of the 2023-24 season with a right knee injury. Surgery to repair the Achilles will be scheduled, followed by months of rehab. Smith also saw his 2021-22 season with Miami's Sioux Falls affiliate in the G League cut short by a knee injury.

"You don't want to see anybody get hurt, but we all have such incredible, deep respect for his journey and what he's had to overcome," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra said Monday night, before the full extent of the injury was confirmed. "I've been in the building all those times last year when nobody else was here and he was doing all the extensive treatment and rehab, around the clock. He just has incredible fortitude. You end up absolutely rooting for guys like Dru."

Smith was enjoying the best season of his brief NBA career. He was averaging 6.3 points, 2.6 rebounds and 1.5 steals in 19.1 minutes per game, all of those career-bests. He was on a two-way contract, which was likely going to be upgraded to a standard NBA deal—one that could have raised his salary from $578,577 to just under $1.2 million.

Smith's 2023-24 season ended when he hurt the ACL in his right knee after slipping off a raised portion of the floor in front of the Cleveland Cavaliers bench on Nov. 22, 2023, that mishap also requiring season-ending surgery and several months of recovery. He had been part of Miami's rotation to that point, appearing in nine of the team's first 15 games.

Smith has averaged 4.5 points in 38 NBA games with Miami and Brooklyn. He's been in training camp with the Heat in each of the last four seasons. ***(AP)***

Chiefs secure top seed with a win over the Steelers

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Andy Reid donned a Santa Claus suit in a giddy Kansas City Chiefs locker room on Christmas Day, then handed his team a present it increasingly looks like it deserves: home-field advantage throughout the AFC playoffs.

How Reid managed to slide into the costume so quickly after Kansas City's clinical 29-10 victory over the reeling Pittsburgh Steelers to lock up the top seed in the AFC for the fourth time in seven years is a mystery (though he hinted there's an elf involved).

How Reid's team manages to pull away from the pack year after year is not.

A lot of Patrick Mahomes. A dash of Travis Kelce. A splash of speed. A defense that quietly goes about its business, even when its leader is standing on the sideline in sweatpants.

Yes, it has been ugly—by Kansas City's lofty standards—at times while the Chiefs have chased a third straight championship. Yet as the playoffs loom, the group that looked so vulnerable for most of the season suddenly seems to be rounding into form.

And the road to the Super Bowl will once again go through Arrowhead Stadium. Just the way the Chiefs like it.

"Getting the No. 1 seed is important," Mahomes said after throwing for 320 yards and three touchdowns. "It's like winning a playoff game."

Even if how the Chiefs locked it up didn't exactly feel like one.

Kansas City (15-1) spent three hours toying with the Steelers (10-6) like a cat batting around shreds of leftover wrapping paper. The Chiefs raced to an early 13-point lead and were never really threatened by Pittsburgh, which has dropped three straight to see its chances of capturing the AFC North take another hit.

"That sucked, to be blunt," Steelers coach Mike Tomlin said.

It often does when Pittsburgh is on one side of the line of scrimmage and Mahomes is on the other. Mahomes is now 4-0 against the Steelers with 17 touchdowns against just one interception. He connected on first-half scoring tosses to Xavier Worthy and Justin Watson and added a history-making 12-yard touchdown flip to Kelce to seal it in the fourth quarter.

The grab was the 77th scoring reception of Kelce's career, breaking a franchise record set by Hall of Famer Tony Gonzalez. The 35-year-old Kelce celebrated by dunking the ball over the goal post, a nod to Gonzalez's signature move. The gesture drew a 15-yard penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct, though it hardly mattered. Harrison Butker made the longer extra point and the Chiefs were firmly in control.

"It's just showing Tony some love," Kelce said with a laugh on the day he joined Gonzalez and Jason Witten as the only tight ends to reach 1,000 receptions. Kelce finished with eight catches for 84 yards while playing for an offense that is starting to get its swagger back.

The defense wasn't bad either, even with five-time Pro Bowl defensive end Chris Jones sidelined by a calf injury. Jones' teammates hardly looked gassed while playing for the third time in 11 days.

"It was tough," cornerback Trent McDuffie said. "I mean, three games in 11 days is crazy for anybody. But I thought we handled it very well."

The Steelers did not. Pittsburgh went 0-3 during the span, a brutal stretch against Super Bowl contenders Philadelphia, Baltimore and Kansas City in which the Steelers looked outclassed.

Perhaps more troubling than the losses is the way they played out. Pittsburgh lost each contest by at least 14 points and could find itself starting the postseason on the road after playing fast-and-loose with the two-game division lead it enjoyed just three weeks ago.

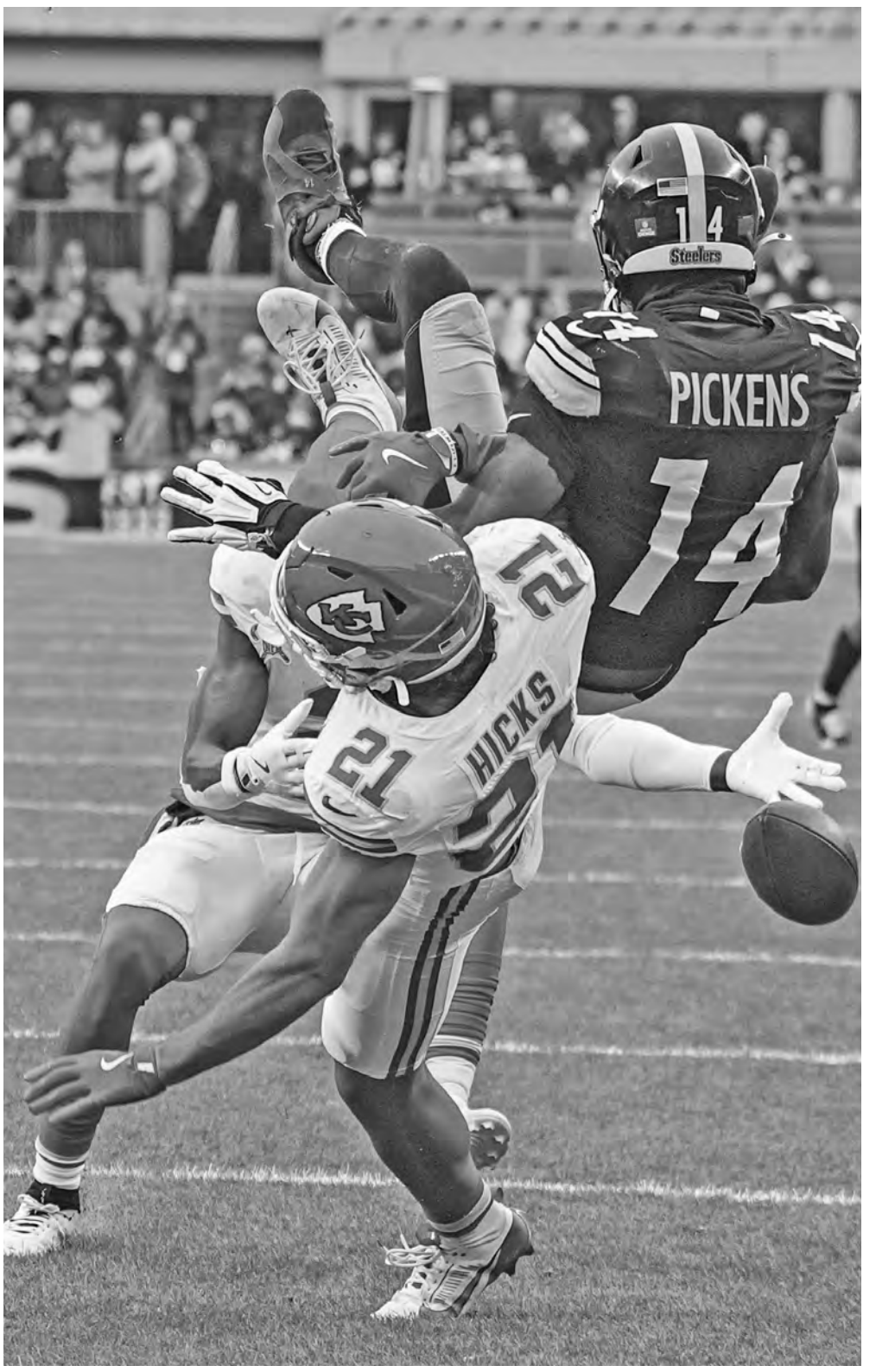
"I think that there's highs and lows in every season," Pittsburgh quarterback Russell Wilson said after throwing for 205 yards with an ill-timed pick in the end zone in the first quarter. "We've got to make sure that we end this last game on the right footing and right belief."

That hasn't been an issue in years in Kansas City. Not with Mahomes at the controls. He spread his 29 completions to eight different players, including a career-best eight to Worthy and four to Hollywood Brown, whose return from injury has given the Chiefs another playmaker in what is starting to look like another stacked deck.

"We're playing, especially offensively, our best football of the year," Mahomes said.

Looks like it. The two-time MVP hardly bothered by the ankle injury he suffered against Cleveland, throwing touchdowns to cap Kansas City's first two drives. And while the Steelers drew within 13-7 and 16-10, they never had the ball with a chance to take the lead in the second half.

Instead, the Chiefs—who spent most of the first three months of the season squeaking by most weeks—zoomed away with the No. 1 seed and several weeks to rest before a bid for a three-peat that certainly looks doable.



AP

Kansas City Chiefs safety Jaden Hicks (21) and Pittsburgh Steelers wide receiver George Pickens (14) fall after a catch attempt during the second half of an NFL football game, Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2024, in Pittsburgh

RAVENS 31, TEXANS 2

HOUSTON (AP)—Lamar Jackson broke the NFL career rushing record for quarterbacks in the Baltimore Ravens' victory over the Houston Texans on Wednesday.

A highlight came when Jackson dashed 48 yards for a touchdown on a run where he reached a career-best top speed of 21.25 mph.

"I was jogging," Jackson said. "I didn't have to do anything."

It was that kind of day for Jackson, who led the Ravens to the 31-2 victory that bolstered his case for MVP as the Ravens moved closer to the AFC North title.

"It's just another phenomenal performance," coach John Harbaugh said. "He set the all-time NFL record for rushing yards (for a quarterback) in pro football. That kind of speaks for itself. It's just kind of what he does every week."

Jackson threw for 168 yards and two touchdowns and ran for 87 yards with that long score. He pushed his career rushing total to 6,110 to move past Michael Vick, who had 6,109 in his 13-year career.

"Michael Vick, one of my favorite players," Jackson said. "That's just dope."

The Ravens (11-5) have already wrapped up their third straight playoff berth and need a victory over Cleveland next week to win the division over Pittsburgh. The Steelers dropped a third straight with a loss to Kansas City on Wednesday.

Jackson, the MVP last season and in 2019, put on a show rivaled only by the spectacular Super Bowl-caliber halftime performance by Beyoncé to give Baltimore its third straight win. And he needed just more than three quarters to do it, giving way to Josh Johnson with about 10 minutes left and the game long decided.

"Just having fun," Jackson said. "The NFL is not easy. I don't care what nobody says. It looks easy, but it's not."

Jackson threw 9- and 1-yard TD passes and was not touched on the 48-yard scoring scamper that made it 24-2 in the third quarter.

Derrick Henry ran for 147 yards and set the Ravens season record with his 16th touchdown on a 2-yard run in the first quarter. He eclipsed Ray Rice (2011) and Mark Ingram (2019).

Baltimore dominated a Houston team reeling after losing dynamic receiver Tank Dell to a season-ending knee injury Saturday.

"This game comes down to guys making plays and they had two exceptional playmakers on their side in Lamar and Derrick Henry," Houston coach DeMeco Ryans said. "They made plays and that was the game."

The AFC South champs struggled to finish drives and got their only points on a safety in the second quarter. C.J. Stroud threw for 185 yards, but was sacked five times and threw an interception and Joe Mixon managed just 26 yards rushing as the Texans (9-7) lost a second straight.

Mixon refused to speak to reporters postgame, but Stroud took the blame for the loss.

"Terrible on my behalf, probably one of my worst games in my whole career," he said. "Just came out flat, didn't have any energy. I didn't lead the offense the way I should have."

Rookie Kamari Lassiter dropped Henry for a 4-yard loss for the safety with about 10 minutes left in the first half to cut the lead to 10-2.

Dameon Pierce then returned the kickoff 45 yards to get the Texans to their 43. But they came away empty when Mixon was stopped on the 1 after grabbing a short pass on fourth-and-3.

Jackson then orchestrated a 99-yard drive to pad the lead. He scrambled to evade the rush and found Mark Andrews for a 67-yard gain to get the Ravens in the red zone with just more than two minutes left in the first half.

Isaiah Likely's 9-yard TD reception two plays later made it 17-2. It was the first 17-2 halftime score in NFL history.

Kyle Hamilton intercepted Stroud's pass on the first drive of the second half. Two plays later, Jackson's long TD run made it 24-2.

He set the rushing record on a 6-yard run on Baltimore's next drive. Later in the drive, he scrambled to escape several defenders before finding Andrews for a 1-yard score to leave Baltimore up 31-2.

43rd Christmas Island Relay this Saturday

LEIGH GASES

Agape Team 1 celebrates as they cross the finish line at the Hyatt Regency Saipan of the 13.1-mile course in the Northern Marianas Athletics' 42nd Annual Christmas Island Relay last year.

By LEIGH GASES
leigh_gases@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Wrap up the holidays with a fun race with family and friends in the long-running traditional Northern Marianas Athletics' 43rd Christmas Island Relay this Saturday.

The annual 13.7mile-long race is back on its new course that they debuted in last year, with a start/finish at the Marianas Beach Resort parking lot, up to Marpi, then back. Start time is 6am.

Agape Team 1 set the new time in the new course last year at 1:11.14.

Student-athletes from Agape Christian School Samuel Zhu, Jireh Wang, Raffy Cai, Caleb Cui, and James Fan broke the 2022 record of the old course set by Run Saipan Alpha at 1:19.52.

A close second was Run Saipan Alpha with captain Tania Tan in a time of 1:13.93, and third place went to Team Dolphin captained by Pony Tang.

According to NMA, "The Annual Christmas Island Relay is just one of the many activities and events that NMA hosts in its continued efforts to promote healthy lifestyle in our community. We invite you to join us and help inspire as many people as possible to get moving to help contribute to uplifting the world through sport."

To sign up, click on the link below.

https://raceroster.com/events/2024/98016/annual-christmas-island-relay-2024

For any questions regarding the event, contact NMA at (670) 788-0929 or email nmi@mf.worldathletics.org.

Sponsors of the event are Run Saipan, Coca-Cola, and Foremost.

MAN

From page 16

down the Lady Blue Jays, 7-4.

Two runs scored for the Batties in the second, but they were behind, 2-4 after the Lady Blue Jays fiery start. However, the Lady Blue Jays cooled down and could not get their timing right as they went on to strike out four more times and could not move their runners over to home plate.

The Batties, on the other hand, went on to score two in the fourth to tie it all up, and wrapped it up with three runs by Emy Oiterong, Angel Deleon Guerrero, and Dina Tenorio for a 7-4 final.

In the individual standings, Kianu Aldan leads four of six batting categories.

She shares the lead with teammate Evita Maratita with the most doubles at five each; Aldan then is atop the triples category with five; has the most homers with four; and the most runs batted in at 34.

Teammate Jaylina Borja leads the league with the most runs scored at 23, and hit the most triples at 16.

After Aldan in the triples category is Wettz's Maria Igitol, Batties' Ashley Fritz, Lady Blue Jays' Bong Babauta, and Man Amigas' Bexx Repeki at three each.

In the home run category, Deleon Guerrero hit one; and Dirty Diamonds' Mo Sablan and Brit Gopez, and 670 BFF's Ashley Angui hit one each.

Deleon Guerrero is second to Aldan in the RBI category with 21; Repeki has 16; and Angui and Cat Dele Cruz have 14 each.

Second to Borja in the most runs category is Aldan with 20; Kiana Camacho of Lady Blue Jays is at 16; Angela Muna has 15; and Deleon Guerrero has 14.

Muna and Jovie Omar have the second most singles with 15 each; Pauline Camacho has 14; and Kiana has 13.

The pitching leader is Omar with the lowest ERA of 1.59. She pitched 64 innings, has an earned run of 15, and pitched a total innings of 66. Second is Maratita with an ERA of 1.66 from a total innings pitched of 59 with 14 ER. Third is Wettz's Amalina Evangelista at 4.17 ERA and 37 ER from a total innings pitched of 62.

The strikeout queen is Jovie Omar with a whopping 52 strikeouts; second is Evangelista at 40; and third is 670 BFF's Louisa Moolang with 34.

AGAPE

From page 16

Bangers made up of John Justo, along with Jerico Castro, Akira Ota, Nahson Padahk, Seth Tababa, Mokyang Kim, Yeshaiah Coleman, Nehemiah Coleman, and Shadrach Coleman.

They beat 4 Starz in a thrilling three set finale, 25-20, 17-25, 15-8.

In the women's division, Heaven on Earth reigned supreme. Michelle Masga, Somia Quan, Charnessa Lizama, Toni Kasilyn Olopai, Moriah Sablan, Kathy Winkfield, Jhaneeka Atalig, Jaime Camacho, and Jan Travilla conquered Grinch Gang in two sets, 25-15, 25-23.

TOMOKANE

From page 16

hole No. 18.

Salas, meanwhile, caught the last bus for the season-ending SGA Ace of Aces Tournament despite finishing fourth in the December tourney held last Dec. 8 at the Kagman golf course's east course.

Patrick Cepeda, Kautz, and Tomokane all finished ahead of Salas with net score of 66, 67, and 68, but since all of them already won, it precluded them from winning and Salas took home the December ace despite shooting only a net 72 (45-47, 92 gross).

In the December closest to the pin, Rick Kautz won hole No. 6 with Tomokane copying the trick in hole No, 6. Larry Deleon Guerrero and Cepeda topped the field in holes No. 6 and 15.

In the longest drive, Joe I. Sablan and Tudela topped holes No. 3 and 18.

Tomokane and Salas now join the 2024 Ace of the Month winners: Larry Deleon Guerrero (January), Alex Tudela (February), Nick Sablan (March), Das Krishnan (April), Joe I. Sablan (May), Freddie Cataluna (June), Jung Eun Teack (July), Patrick Cepeda (August), Rene Batallones (September), and Rick Kautz (October).

The 2024 SGA Ace of Aces Tournament is set for this Saturday, Dec. 28, 2024, at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort east course. Tee Time is 9am. SGA is reminding handicap renewals are due very soon. Members are requested to bring $15 for renewal this Saturday.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	22	8	.733	–
New York	20	10	.667	2
Philadelphia	11	17	.393	10
Brooklyn	11	18	.379	10½
Toronto	7	23	.233	15
Southeast Division				
Orlando	19	12	.613	–
Miami	14	13	.519	3
Atlanta	15	15	.500	3½
Charlotte	7	22	.241	11
Washington	4	23	.148	13
Central Division				
Cleveland	26	4	.867	–
Milwaukee	16	12	.571	9
Indiana	15	15	.500	11
Chicago	13	17	.433	13
Detroit	13	17	.433	13

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Houston	20	9	.690	–
Memphis	20	10	.667	½
Dallas	19	11	.633	1½
San Antonio	15	15	.500	5½
New Orleans	5	25	.167	15½
Northwest Division				
Oklahoma City	23	5	.821	–
Denver	16	12	.571	7
Minnesota	15	14	.517	8½
Portland	9	20	.310	14½
Utah	7	21	.250	16
Pacific Division				
L.A. Lakers	17	13	.567	–
L.A. Clippers	17	13	.567	–
Phoenix	15	14	.517	1½
Golden State	15	14	.517	1½
Sacramento	13	17	.433	4

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
y-Buffalo	12	3	0	.800	469	331
Miami	7	8	0	.467	305	329
e-N.Y. Jets	4	11	0	.267	292	344
e-New England	3	12	0	.200	259	361
South						
y-Houston	9	7	0	.563	349	358
Indianapolis	7	8	0	.467	318	359
e-Jacksonville	3	12	0	.200	277	396
e-Tennessee	3	12	0	.200	284	417
North						
x-Baltimore	11	5	0	.688	483	351
x-Pittsburgh	10	6	0	.625	363	328
Cincinnati	7	8	0	.467	423	393
e-Cleveland	3	12	0	.200	245	380
West						
*-Kansas City	15	1	0	.938	385	288
Denver	9	6	0	.600	363	281
L.A. Chargers	9	6	0	.600	328	274
e-Las Vegas	3	12	0	.200	264	390

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
x-Philadelphia	12	3	0	.800	402	283
Washington	10	5	0	.667	432	348
e-Dallas	7	8	0	.467	324	404
e-N.Y. Giants	2	13	0	.133	215	362
South						
Atlanta	8	7	0	.533	327	349
Tampa Bay	8	7	0	.533	427	352
e-New Orleans	5	10	0	.333	309	346
e-Carolina	4	11	0	.267	283	448
North						
x-Detroit	13	2	0	.867	493	299
x-Minnesota	13	2	0	.867	396	276
x-Green Bay	11	4	0	.733	413	287
e-Chicago	4	11	0	.267	283	342
West						
L.A. Rams	9	6	0	.600	329	347
Seattle	8	7	0	.533	339	340
e-Arizona	7	8	0	.467	344	342
e-San Francisco	6	9	0	.400	331	349

Reaves' layup allows Lakers to escape Warriors.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

43rd Christmas Island Relay this Saturday.

PAGE 15

Man Amigas vs. Batties in finals

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The undefeated Man Amigas have made it to the final test of the NMI Softball Association Women's League 2024 season—the championship against the Batties this Saturday at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Softball Field.

The Man Amigas blanked the Dirty Diamonds, 10-0, which coincided with Man Amigas' win-loss record of 10-0.

The Man Amigas got down to business early as the top of the lineup, Jaylina Borja, got things started with a walk. Two more walks were issued to the next three batters as Dirty Diamonds pitcher Joma Santos could not get a handle on the ball.

» Aldan leads 4 batting categories

All four batters rounded the bases for a 4-0 lead, and it didn't stop there as Heather Kladikm added another. Rosie Saralu joined in the fray, followed by two runs from Keo Rios and Alannah Sablan. When the dust settled, Man Amigas were up, 8-0.

The Dirty Diamonds' struggle was also evident at the plate as they couldn't get anyone in scoring position until the third inning. But even then, they couldn't get her home as the Man Amigas' pitching and defense held steadfast and didn't give up a run.

Meanwhile, Man Amigas tacked on two more runs in the fifth inning to lead, 10-0, and the game ended shortly after the Dirty Diamonds failed to produce in the last inning.

As for the Batties, they took

See MAN on Page 15

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Batties players pose for a group photo during the NMI Softball Association Women's League 2024 at the Miguel "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Softball Field.

6th Agape Christmas v-ball tourney underway

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

The 6th Annual Agape Christmas Volleyball Tournament is underway at the Agape Gymnasium.

It began just in time for the holiday break last Saturday with 10 men's teams and eight women's teams slaying their way to the championships.

The men's teams are the Volleyho's, Zooparty, Shaboingboing, Frosty Flights, 4 Starz, Mistletoe Bros, Oasis, Team SWAT, Bomba, and South Poles.

The women's team includes Frosty Tips, Sleighing It, Kiss My Ace, Winter Baddies, Lady Starz, Serve-ivors, Heaven on Earth, and All Stars.

As of last Monday, Team Swat is atop the men's standings with a 5-1 win-loss record. Their team is made up of Dylan Mister, Tyce Mister, Blake Mister, Logan Mister, John Nekaifes, Dylan Salalila, James Salalila, Casey Chambers, Tyler Wilsey, J.R. Gechig, and Justin Ma.

In the women's standings, Lady Starz and defending champions Heaven on Earth are both undefeated with three wins each.

Lady Starz include Aiko Rasiang, Nichiko Rasiang, Jen Sav, Veralei Hapdei, Vinalei Hapdei, Kat Saures, Jovi Moses, Jasmine John, Knohlynn Gechig, Mei Rengiil, Erica Zandueta, and Ha'ani Passi.

Heaven on Earth's roster this year consists of Moriah Sablan, Somia Quan, Kathy Winkfield, Serafina Rogoyawa, Michelle Masga, Dayna Macaranas, Naomi Billimon, Pearl McCord, and Kaia Travilla.

The prize for first place is $400, while second place is $200.

The annual tournament was absent for two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the inaugural event held in December 2019. It made a comeback with more teams than ever in both divisions in 2022.

Last tournament's men's champions were the Jolly

See AGAPE on Page 15

LEIGH GASES

Heaven on Earth's Kaia Travilla, background, reaches for the ball as an All Stars player does the same during their game in the 6th Annual Agape Christmas Volleyball Tournament at the Agape Gymnasium last Monday.

LEIGH GASES

A Bomba player smacks a kill as Shaboingboing players defend the net during their game in the 6th Annual Agape Christmas Volleyball Tournament at the Agape Gymnasium last Monday.

Tomokane, Salas top SGA November tourney

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Ton Tomokane topped the Saipan Golfers Associaiton November Ace of the Month Tournament held last Nov. 17 at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort east.

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

Ton Tomokane and Ray Salas were hailed champions of the November and December Ace of the Month tournaments of the Saipan Golfers Association.

Tomokane won the November tourney after he finished second to September winner Rene Batallones during the competition held last Nov. 17 at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort east.

Batallones beat Tomakane by a mere stroke after firing a net 67, while Tomakane finished with a net 68 on the strength of his 43 in the front and a 39 in the back for a gross score of 82. Mariano Fajardo completed the Top 3 with his net 69.

"The course was great and challenging. The weather was clear for a game of golf," said Tomakane.

He admitted to be a newbie as far as club play is concerned after picking up the sport seven years ago.

"I used to play once a year until I got hooked on the game and from there I started to progress slowly but surely. In other words, one hole at a time."

The 52-year-old then made a shoutout to his colleagues on the golf course. "I dedicate the win to all the golfers that motivated me to have patience and to challenge myself physically and mentally. Golf is complicated and you need to have a clear mind to control the course."

In the November closest to the pin, Rick Kautz was without peer in hole No. 4, while Alex Tudela swept the remaining holes—Nos. 6, 11, and 15.

In the longest drive, Freddie Cataluna brought the lumber in hole No. 3. Ditto for Das Krishnan in

See TOMOKANE on Page 15